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UNITY AND CONTINUITY IN COVENANTAL THOUGHT: A STUDY IN THE REFORMED TRADITION TO THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY

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VOLUME TWO

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John Calvin: Covenantal Conditions

Calvin's view of the law in relation to the covenant leads naturally to the question: Was the covenant of grace a mutual, bilateral, conditional covenant, or can the claim be sustained that for Calvin the covenant was purely a unilateral, unconditional notion of testament?[1] It has already been demonstrated that the basic argument in support of this claim is untenable, that is, that 'Calvin asserted that the law was equivalent to the old testament and the gospel to the new testament'.[2] The passages which gave this impression were those in which Calvin was speaking of the 'bare' law and not the law as given in its fullness. Calvin did not use a strict law/gospel principle of interpretation in relation to the testaments, but rather a letter/spirit principle which was manifest in both.[3]

No one would deny that Calvin considered the covenant as having its source in the free mercy of God: 'It does not spring from either the worthiness or merits of men; it has its cause, and stability, and effect, and completion solely in the grace of God', he said.[4] It was an eternal, unchangeable, and inviolable covenant, void of human initiative in its origin and establishment.[5] But simply because it was a covenant, said Calvin, it had 'two parts. The first was a declaration of gratuitous love...the other was an exhortation to the sincere endeavour to cultivate uprightness...as if God had said, "See how kindly I indulge thee: for I do not require integrity from thee simply on account of my authority, which I might justly do; but whereas I owe thee nothing, I condescend graciously to engage in a mutual covenant".' This was the kind of covenant, Calvin went on to explain, that men make with

companions.[6]

Calvin regarded mutual stipulations as essential to a covenant. For example, he said that the name 'covenant' was applied to the prohibition not to take the spoils of Jericho only 'because a mutual stipulation had been made'.[7] In his *Commentary on Jeremiah* he added that the word 'covenant' was only meaningful when the question of the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of the people to God's law was involved, otherwise 'we shall feel surprised that the word covenant is so often mentioned, and it will appear unmeaning to us'.[8]

In the *Commentary on Zechariah* Calvin said, 'The relation, we know, between God and his people, as to the covenant, is mutual'.[9] This stress on mutuality was highlighted throughout the commentaries and sermons, and was not confined to Old Testament books. In the *Commentary on Romans* Calvin offered the following definition: 'A covenant is that which is conceived in express and solemn words, and contains a mutual obligation'.[10] He developed this idea of mutuality in respect to baptism in the *Commentary on I Corinthians*. Baptism, like circumcision, was 'a contract of mutual obligations: for as the Lord by that symbol receives us into his household, and introduces us among his people, so we pledge our fidelity to him, that we will never afterwards have any other spiritual Lord. Hence as it is on God's part a covenant of grace that he contracts with us, in which he promises forgiveness and a new life, so on our part it is an oath of spiritual warfare, in which we promise perpetual subjection to him'.[11]

The same emphasis is found in the *Institutes*: 'In all covenants of his mercy the Lord requires of his servants in return uprightness and sanctity of life'.[12] Those with whom the Lord kept covenant were those who loved him, and 'who have undertaken his covenant', because the promises of the covenant 'declare that there is recompense

ready for you if you do what they enjoin'.[13] The expectation of eternal life through 'Christ as the pledge of their covenant...must have been experienced upon the hearts of all who truly consented to his covenant'.[14] The covenant sign in baptism signified the 'anagogic relationship' between God and his people. It was not only a token 'by which they were assured of adoption as the people and household of God', but 'they in turn professed to enlist in God's service...and...swear fealty to him'.[15] Even when relating the covenant to the eternal election of God, Calvin stressed that 'the children of Jacob were now under extraordinary obligation, having been received into that dignity'.[16] And that obligation was manifest in those 'who embraced the Lord's covenant with their whole hearts and minds',[17] and 'keep the law of the covenant, that is, obey the Word', rather than merely boast in the name of the covenant.[18]

Clearly then, as far as God was concerned the covenant was given in gratuitous, unconditional promises which he pledged to uphold and fulfil. As far as men were concerned there was an equally clear responsibility 'to embrace' and to 'keep the law of the covenant'. In one remarkable passage, Calvin packed together all these ideas concerning the mutuality of the covenant: 'We must now consider how the covenant is rightly kept; namely when the word precedes, and we embrace the sign as a testimony and pledge of grace; for as God binds himself to keep the promise he has given to us; so the consent of faith and of obedience is demanded of us'.[19]

Conversely, it was possible to violate or despise the Lord's covenant. This occured solely 'because the people were to blame for such a violation'. It could not be 'charged against the covenant'.[20] That was because God would always be faithful to his covenant, though men and nations would depart from it, either temporarily or in complete apostacy.[21] Those who despised the sign of the

covenant, either by neglecting its administration or by subsequently treating it with contempt, could make void the promises of the covenant as far as they were concerned. But that would not ultimately affect the fulfilment of God's side, 'For', said Calvin, 'a contrast must be understood between the people's covenant and God's. He had said just before, I will be mindful of my covenant. He now says *not of thine*. Hence he reconciles what seemed opposites, namely, that he would be mindful of his own agreement, and yet it had been dissipated, broken, and abolished. He shows that it was fixed on his own side, as they say, but vain on the people's side'.[22]

Covenant-breaking was frequently described by Calvin in terms of violating the law of God 'in which the covenant was sealed up'. This involved the whole service of God, or 'the trust and faithfulness of the divine promises and the trust which ought to be reposed in them'.[23] In other words covenant-breaking came about through want of faith and obedience. Forgetfulness of God's works and a spirit of ingratitude towards him for all his goodness were frequently given as the reason for covenant-breaking.[24] Again unfaithfulness to the paternal or marital bond that existed between God and his people was described as covenant-breaking.[25] Or it could be a case of outright rebellion and traitorous behaviour against the government of God and his messengers which Calvin described as trampling upon his covenant.[26] Calvin's works are literally strewn with references to breaking the covenant in a variety of ways. It is difficult to see how Calvin could consider the covenant as being mutual and capable of being broken in any way, if the covenant was not in some sense conditional. Specific references to covenantal conditions are to be expected, and such are not lacking.

From the divine perspective God bound himself in the covenant to those people whom he had chosen and adopted out of his free mercy to be his own, and whom he had promised

to bless. This self-binding of God in the covenant was one of Calvin's repeated themes in this respect. 'God binds himself to keep the promise given to us', said Calvin.[27] And this covenant or bond with God signified entry into the church or kingdom of God.[28] God's people were brought out of their former sinful bondage to be 'bound to Himself with a holier tie'.[29] This was frequently likened to the adoptive or marriage bond.[30] In the 'very formula of the covenant' God promised to be the God of his people and to dwell among them. This, declared Calvin, 'is a very pledge of salvation, how can he manifest himself to a man as his God without also opening to him the treasures of his salvation? He is our God on this condition: that he dwell among us'. And God dwelt among his people in order to govern them, because 'God also doeth bynde himselfe to his people, with condition that hee will governe them by his holie spirite, and write his worde in their hearts'.[31]

On the same theme in his *Commentary on the Psalms* Calvin said that this promise, 'I will dwell in the midst of you' (Exodus 25:18), was 'that remarkable article of the covenant', given as a memorial to God's people. The eternity and immutability of God would be of no comfort to to them apart from this - 'unless we had in our hearts the knowledge of him, which, produced by his gracious covenant, begets in us the confidence arising from a mutual relationship between him and us...we have his word by which he has laid himself under obligation to us, and...he has deposited with us his own memorial, which contains in it a sacred and indissoluble bond of fellowship'.[32] The covenant, claimed Calvin, was the foundation which held up the entire structure of God's saving relationship with his people.[33]

On God's side, he pledged himself, though under no necessity or obligation to do so, to be the God of his chosen people. That, with all its implications, was the

condition which he bound himself to fulfil. But, according to Calvin, this did not negate his people's responsibility with respect to the covenant, 'For the condition had been laid down that they should faithfully keep God's covenant'.[34] Abraham, for example, as a responsible adult, before he was 'received into the fellowship of the covenant', had to learn beforehand the conditions of the covenant which God intended to make with him.[35] Expounding the phrase, 'Walk before me' (Gen. 17:1), from the formula of the covenant, Calvin said, 'In making the covenant, God stipulates for obedience, on the part of his servant.... The foundation, indeed, of the divine calling, is a gratuitous promise; but it follows immediately after, that they whom he has chosen as a peculiar people to himself, should devote themselves to the righteousness of God. For on this condition, he adopts children as his own, that he may, in return, obtain the place and honour of a Father'.[36] The Jews were explicitly warned that to imagine that because God had graciously bound himself to Abraham and his descendants in covenant, that he was automatically bound to them irrespective of their behaviour, 'For the Lord had not restricted himself to them but on an absolute condition, and if this were violated by them, they would be deprived, like covenant-breakers and traitors, of all the advantages derived from the covenant'.[37]

This was indeed what happened to Israel. They thought that the covenantal promise made to Abraham secured them in the land that God had given them, but, as Calvin paraphrased the prophet Micah: 'False confidence deceives you, as ye think that ye are inseparably fixed in your habitation. God indeed has made such a promise, but that condition was added,- "If ye will stand faithful to his covenant".'[38] God's complaint of Israel was that they wanted God to be bound to them, while they should remain free of every obligation. But, Calvin continued it could

not be like that in a covenantal relationship: 'It was mutual: ye seem not to think that there are two parties in a covenant, and that there is, according to what is commonly said, a reciprocal obligation: but I on my part promised to your father to be his Father, and I also stipulated with him that he was to obey me, to obey my word, and whatsoever I might afterwards require'.[39] It was the same lesson which was given in the law, as Calvin explained, 'The law is called *testimonies* or *agreements*, because, as men enter into contracts upon certain conditions, so God, by his covenant, entered into a contract with this people, and bound them to himself'.[40] The service of God's people as they gathered to worship him according to the prescribed order of his word, Calvin also described as part of the conditions stipulated in the sacred covenant, and obedience to them was the way to 'continue stedfast' in it, because 'the keeping of God's covenant always occupies the first place in his service'.[41]

Basically, then, Calvin considered faith and obedience to the law as the conditions demanded of God's people in the covenant.[42] Just 'as the covenant begins with a solemn article concerning the promise of grace', so, continued Calvin, 'faith and prayer are required, above all things, to the proper keeping of it'.[43] Faith, obedience and love were so interrelated in Calvin's thought as to be inseparable. The one could not exist without the other.[44] The priority of faith was frequently mentioned,[45] but obedience was also productive of faith and right knowledge of God.[46] And just as love was often described as the fruit of faith and obedience, so it was referred to as the spring of obedience.[47]

It is not surprising therefore to find Calvin making obedience to the law a condition of the covenant as well as faith. Indeed, he declared, 'the covenant and the law are synonomous; only the word, law, in my view, is added as explanatory, as though he had said that they had violated

the covenant of the Lord, which had been sanctioned and sealed by the law'.[48] In the *Harmony of the Pentateuch* obedience to the law was defined as 'to keep his covenant', which together with listening to his voice was the fidelity towards God which was required on the part of Israel, while God's part was that of gratuitously adopting them and promising them so great a blessing.[49]

Precisely the same arrangement was demonstrated in Calvin's exposition of the sacraments. He said, 'The sacraments are like contracts (*syngraphae*) by which the Lord gives us his mercy and from it eternal life; and we in turn promise him obedience'. He went on to describe this promise as 'perfect obedience to the law which God requires of us', and although no one was able to attain to that standard, 'this stipulation is included in the covenant of grace under which are contained both forgiveness of sins and the spirit of sanctification', so that the promise was always joined with 'a plea for pardon and a petition for help'.[50]

There can be little doubt from this sample of evidence that Calvin regarded the covenant as two-sided. On the one hand it was a gratuitous, unilateral promise, while on the other hand there was a strong conditional, bilateral element involved. In a striking passage from one of his *Sermons on Job* both these elements were demonstrated with respect to conversion.[51] Calvin outlined three steps in the reconciliation of men with God: 'To be ashamed of their sinnes', was 'the first steppe', otherwise men would not seek mercy and forgiveness, but continue to languish in their misery. The second step was 'that we must come unto God'. This, said Calvin, was only possible because God of his infinite goodness inspired men to seek him 'and flee for refuge unto his mercy, and there rest'. That was the gratuitous side. But, Calvin continued, men must take the promises God sets before them and apply them to their own use. He further specified what this involved. It meant

coming to God with his promises, and saying, 'Thou showest that thou art willing to recieve sinners to mercy: beholde, I am one... Therefore I doubt not Lord, but thou wilt make mee feele thy grace and goodnesse'. The third step in the process of reconciliation was to manifest and declare openly to neighbours the goodness of God. While stressing that enabling always came from God, Calvin clearly demonstrated a meaningful responsibility of man in the areas of faith and confession in being made a partaker of the covenant of grace. It is also to be noted that here Calvin explicitly employed the kind of syllogism that is said to be a device used by the Calvinists to achieve assurance of acceptance with God, with the strong implication that it was not to be found in Calvin.[62]

Calvin was not unaware of the tension arising from the affirmation that God's promise in the covenant was gratuitous and inviolable, and his oft repeated insistence that it was conditional. This question was dealt with chiefly in his discussion of election, which will be considered later, and in the issue already discussed concerning the acceptability and justification of the works of the believer. But elsewhere also Calvin distinguished where these differed and how covenantal conditions were to be viewed in relation to the promise of God. He raised the question in his *Commentary on the Psalms* with reference to the temporary destruction of the Davidic kingdom. The covenantal promise relating to the everlasting nature of the kingdom, he said, was 'perfectly gratuitous', but now it appeared to be overthrown by the disobedience of Israel. Calvin asked, ' Did the continuance of the kingdom rest upon good conduct, or human merit? for the terms of this agreement ("If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimonies which I will teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore".) would seem to suggest that God's covenant would not be made good, unless men faithfully performed their part, and that thus the

effect of grace promised was suspended upon obedience'.[53] In reply, Calvin distinguished between the ultimate purpose of God's promise, and the blessings or 'things which were accessories to the covenant'. The gratuitous nature of God's promise involved the sending of a Saviour and Redeemer. It was in Christ that David's kingdom had its everlasting establishment. Nothing could alter that. God would stand 'firm to his own purpose'.

The conditional nature of the covenant, therefore, related to the blessings attached. These could only be enjoyed 'if they obeyed his commandments', and this 'obedience which God demands is particularly stated to be the obedience of the covenant, to teach us that we must...serve him...within the prescription of his word'. When the Jews flouted God's word they were temporarily excluded from divine favour: 'God...took vengance upon the people for their ingratitude, so as to show that the terms of the covenant did not run conditionally to no purpose'. Because some did not believe and consequently disobeyed, profaned, or broke the covenant from their perspective, that did not alter the gratuitous promise, to which God remained faithful, of a Redeemer for his people.[54]

In the *Commentary on Jeremiah* Calvin said that there was a twofold principle involved in this kind of situation. One was that 'the grace of God cannot be wholly obliterated' as far as the covenant was concerned. In this respect 'the covenant of God did not depend on the people's faithfulness or integrity'. The second was that the covenant could be said to be 'a mutual stipulation; for God made a covenant with Abraham on this condition - that he should walk perfectly with him', and this stipulation remained in force.[55] Calvin was simply saying that with respect to the initiation, establishment, and ultimate intention of the covenant, the promise was gratuitous, unilateral and inviolable; but with respect to participation in the blessings of the covenant, it was

conditional and bilateral.

On the surface of things this would seem to make God's covenant simply a general thing with respect to the coming of Christ, while the question of personal participation and continuance in the covenant depended upon the moral performance of the individual. But this would be to reverse the way Calvin viewed the question and to take it out of the context of his theology of election and spiritual regeneration. For Calvin, entry into the covenant proper had nothing to do with personal moral performance; it was entirely of grace, through the operation of the Spirit in the heart. Consequently, the faith and obedience by which Calvin said the covenant was kept were not meritorious human achievements, but rather evidences of life, of divine election and personal participation in the covenant of grace: 'An unfeigned love of God's law is an undoubted evidence of adoption, since this love is the work of the Holy Spirit'.[56]

For Calvin the obligations or conditions of the covenant were also accounted for in justification through Christ. They were fulfilled in the provisions of the covenant for the elect, and could not be meritorious in any sense. It was by divine direction and enabling that the believer was able to fulfil them, albeit imperfectly in this life.[57] But as conditions, they were no less real in the believer's experience. Though God was their author, they involved the active participation of the believer in their outworking. And they served as identifying marks: 'Whenever, therefore, we hear that he [God] does good to those who keep his law, let us remember that the children of God are there designated by the duty that ought in them to be perpetual... But again, let us keep in mind that the fulfilment of the Lord's mercy does not depend upon believers' works but that he fulfils the promise of salvation for those who respond to his call with upright life, because in those who are directed to the good by his

Spirit he recognizes the only genuine insignia of his children'.[58] On the other hand, Calvin taught, it was failure to obey God's law and keep his covenant which identified non-children of God, even though they may have been brought up within the sphere of the covenanted community and were 'flesh sons of the saints', who could idly boast of the fatherhood of God on that account.[59] It was the conditions of the covenant which the Lord required, that exposed their 'empty exultation' thus rendering them inexcusable, and also ensured that the goodness of God was not mocked.[60] The covenant was made with these in a general sense, but God 'does not at once give them the spirit of regeneration that would enable them to perservere in the covenant to the very end'.[61]

NOTES: Chapter Ten

1 Baker, *Bullinger and the Covenant*, 193-198; Trinterud, 'The Origins', 41.

2 *Ibid.*, 194.

3 Calvin, *Com. on II Cor.*, 3:6; cf. *Com. on Isa.*, 25:6; 27:6; 62:2; *Com. on Jer.*, 31:31-32; *Com. on Rom.*, 10:5.

4 *Com. on Dan.*, 9:4; cf. *Inst.*, I.6.1; II.8.21; II.10.2,7; II.11.4,7,11; III.14.6,17; IV.14.6; *Com. on Ps.*, 89:3,28,34; *Com. on Zech.*, 9:11.

5 *Com. on Gen.*, 25:19; *Com. on Isa.*, 55:3; *Com. on Jer.*, 31:3,36; 32:40; 33:19-21; 50:5.

6 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:2; cf. *Com. on Gen.*, 12:3; *Com. on Amos*, 6:12.

7 *Com. on Joshua*, 7:10.

8 *Com. on Jer.*, 11:2; cf. *Har. of Pent.*, 1.318-319 (Ex. 19:5); *Comm. on Jer.*, 22:24; 32:40.

9 *Com. on Zech.*, 9:11.

10 *Com. on Rom.*, 9:4.

11 *Com. on I Cor.*, 1:13; cf. *Inst.*, IV.16.4. For similar statements on the two-sidedness of the covenant, see *Har. of Pent.*, 3..321(Ex.24:5); *Com. on Ps.*, 78:37; 81:4; 105:8-11; *Com. on Jer.*, 22:24; *Com. on Dan.*, 9:4; *Com. on Hos.*, 2:16, 20; 5:7; *Com. on Mal*, 2:5-10; *Com. on Rom.*, 3:3, 29.

12 *Inst.*, III.17.5.

13 *Inst.*, III.17.6.

14 *Inst.*, II.10.23; cf. *Com. on Gen.*, 17:9; *Har. of Gosp.* 3.139(Mk.14:24).

15 *Inst.*, IV.16.4.

16 *Inst.*, III.21.6.

17 *Inst.*, II.11.8.

18 *Inst.*, IV.16.14; cf. *Com. on Gen.*, 17:9; *Har. of Pent.*, 2.330 (Lev.2:13); *Com. on Ps.*, 103:18; 132:12.

19 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:9.

20 *Inst.*, II.11.8; cf. *Har. of Pent.*, 3.218(Lev.26:9); *Com. on Ps.*, 78:10; *Com. on Isa.*, 24:5; *Com. on Hos.*, 4:6; 5:7; 6:7; *Com. on Mal.*, 2:4,9,10.

21 *Inst.*, III.21.7; IV.15:17; IV.16:14; *Har. on Pent.*, 1.319; 4.326(Ex.19:6; Dt.31:16); *Com. on Gen.*, 17:19; *Com. on Isa.*, 31:6; 54:8-9; 55:3; *Com. on Jer.*, 21:11-12;

50:5; *Comm. on Ezk.* 3:20; *Com. on Dan.*, 11:29; *Com. on Zech.* 8:8; *Comm. on Mal.*, 2:11; *Comm. on Rom.*, 11:29; *Et. Pred.*, in *CR*, 36.281-282(Reid 82).

22 *Com. on Ezk.*, 16:61 (see entire passage 16:60-62); cf. *Inst.*, IV.15.22; IV.16.9,26; *Har. of Pent.*, 1.105-108 (Ex.4:25); *Com. on Gen.*, 17:14; *Com. on Jer.*, 13:11; 14:21.

23 *Com. on Ps.*, 78:10,36; cf. 89:30; *Har. on Pent.*, 2.124, 406; 4.326; 1.370-373(Dt.4:23; 17:3; 31:16; 31:10-13); *Com. on Isa.*, 24:5; *Com. on Jer.*, 11:2,8,10; 22:9; *Com. on Amos*, 2:4-6; 6:11-12; *Com. on Mic.*, 2:7-11.

24 *Com. on Gen.*, 9:11; *Com. on Ps.*, 78:11; 89:34; 132:12; *Com. on Jer.*, 11:6-8,22; 22:9; 31:20.

25 *Com. on Ezk.*, 16; *Com. on Hos.*, 2:19-20; 6:7; *Com. on Mal.*, 2:9-10,14-16; *Har. of Gosp.*, 1.13(Lk.1:17).

26 *Inst.*, IV.2.3,7; IV.7.30; IV.9.2; *Com. on Isa.*, 55:3; *Com. on Ezk.*, 16:59; *Com. on Zech.*, 11:10-11; *Com. on Rom.*, 3:3.

27 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:9; cf. *Com. on Zech.*, 13:9; see Lillback, 'The Binding of God', 237-242.

28 *Inst.*, IV.1.20.

29 *Har. of Pent.*, 1.339-340(Ex.20:1).

30 *Com. on Ps.*, 74:20; *Com. on Ezk.*, 16; *Com. on Hos.*, 2:19-20; *Com. on Mal.*, 2:14-16.

31 *Inst.*, II.10.8; *Ser. on Deut.*, 1175 (32:44-47); 177-181 (4:44-49; 5:1-3).

32 *Com. on Ps.*, 102:12; cf. 81:9, where in a phrase reminiscient of Bullinger, Calvin speaks of the sovereignty and preeminence of God as 'the leading article of the covenant'.

33 *Com. on Isa.*, 59:21; cf. *Com. on Ps.*, 67:2; *Com. on Hag.*, 2:1-5.

34 *Inst.*, III.21.6.

35 *Inst.*, IV.16.24.

36 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:1.

37 *Com. on Isa.*, 65:1.

38 *Com. on Mic.*, 2:10; cf. *Com. on John*, 8:33ff.

39 *Com. on Mal.*, 2:5.

40 *Com. on Ps.*, 78:57; *Com. on Amos*, 5:14.

41 *Com. on Ps.*, 89:1; cf. 50:5; *Har. of Pent.*, 2.330 (Lev.2:13).

42 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:9; *Har. of Pent.*, 3.273-274(Dt.19:10).

43 *Com. on Ps.*, 103:18; cf. 50:5.

44 *Inst.*, III.2.6; *Com.on Jas.*, 2:18; *Com.on I Pet.*, 1:22.

45 *Com.on Ps.*, 78:21; *Com.on Mic.*, 2:3; *Com.on John*, 9:6; *Com.on Heb.*, 11:7-8; *Com.on Jas.*, 2:22-23; *Com.on I John* 4:6.

46 *Inst.*, I.6.2.

47 *Inst.*, III.20.42; *Har.of Pent.*, 3.190-196(Dt.10:12; Lev.19:18); *Com.on Ps.*, 40:7; *Com.on I John*, 2:3; 4:21.

48 *Com.on Hos.*, 8:1.

49 *Har.of Pent.*, 1.318-319(Ex.19:5).

50 *Inst.*, IV.13.6; cf. III.17:5.

51 *Ser.on Job*, 598 (33:26-28).

52 See Kendall, *op.cit.*, 8-9, 33-34, 40-41, 56-57, 69-74; J.B. Torrance, 'Calvin and Puritanism', 275.

53 *Com.on Ps.*, 102:12.

54 *Ibid.*

55 *Com.on Jer.*, 14:21.

56 *Com.on Ps.*, 119:159; cf. *Inst.*, IV.10.15; *Com.on Jas.*, 2:18-23.

57 *Inst.*, III.17.9-10.

58 *Inst.*, III.17.6.

59 *Har.of Gosp.*, 1.36-37(Lk.1:49).

60 *Inst.*, III.17.5.

61 *Inst.*, III.21.7.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

John Calvin: Covenant and Predestination

Calvin began his treatment of the doctrine of God's eternal election in the *Institutes* by relating it immediately to the doctrine of the covenant. 'In actual fact', he said, 'the covenant of life is not preached equally among all men, and among those to whom it is preached, it does not gain the same acceptance either constantly or in equal degree...there is no doubt that this variety also serves the decision of God's eternal election'.[1]

Like Zwingli, Calvin firmly rooted the covenant in the election of God. In the *Commentary on the Psalms*, when speaking of the ratification of the eternal covenant with David, Calvin said, 'If, therefore, the cause or origin of this covenant is sought for, we must necessarily fall back upon the Divine election'.[2] Again in the New Testament *Commentary on Romans*, Calvin's exposition of election from Paul's classic passage on the doctrine (Romans 9-11) was closely related to the idea of the covenant.[3]

The place given to the discussion of predestination and election in the *Institutes* has been the subject of considerable speculation. Because Calvin reserved specific treatment of the doctrine in the 1559 edition until near the end of his discussion of the theme of salvation, it has been asserted that 'Everything else that Calvin has to say about God, Christ, the appropriation of salvation has already been said without any mention of election'.[4] This can be misleading. It takes no account of the pervading reality of divine choice and will which runs through the discussion of other doctrines by Calvin, particularly the person of God,[5] the nature of man,[6]

providence,[7] and the depravity and inability of man to do good. Concerning the latter, Calvin specifically cited Augustine's rebuke of those who think that 'free election is indiscriminately given to all'.[8]

But nowhere was this elective significance more pervasive and evident than in those sections where 'Calvin unfolds the doctrine of the covenant'.[9] There he continually distinguished those chosen by God and covenanted to him and who look for the eternal spiritual blessings of the covenant, from those even in Israel, who were interested merely in temporal, material prosperity promised to the covenanted community.[10] Because in a systematic work Calvin treated one doctrine in a specific place does not mean that it bore no relation to all the doctrines which preceded it. The *Commentaries* and *Sermons* easily demonstrate that the doctrine of election interpenetrated all other doctrines in Calvin's thinking, although not in a way that made it the 'central dogma', or made it interpenetrate other doctrines more than any other of the doctrines interpenetrate each other.[11]

The question scholars have debated is why Calvin, who dealt with predestination alongside the doctrine of providence in the earlier editions of the *Institutes*, separated them in the final edition.[12] In this discussion it is important to remember that it was not the doctrine of predestination that Calvin relocated. This impression has often been given. Predestination together with providence had formerly followed Calvin's teaching on the law, salvation, justification by faith, and Christian liberty. Predestination remained in that position with only the minor adjustment of the chapter on prayer being brought forward in order to relate to Christian freedom.[13] It was the doctrine of providence which Calvin shifted, for the express purpose of enabling men to 'see the presence of divine power stirring as much in the continuing state of the universe as in its inception'. Calvin did not want

God to be adjudged a remote, 'cold and barren' Creator.'[14]

The real question then is why Calvin saw fit to leave the doctrine of predestination at the end of his soteriological section, and not move it to what some have regarded as its logical place alongside providence.'[15] Others have argued that it is more logically situated where it is because of the Christological orientation of Calvin's doctrine of election. Wendel, following Jacobs, said that Calvin 'connected predestination with the Christ and his work in order to show more clearly that it is in Christ that election has taken place'.'[16]

Qualified acceptance can be given to Wendel's statement, but this line of argument raises two important questions. The first is: Would predestination have lost its Christological orientation if Calvin had placed it 'at the conclusion of the doctrine of God'? And secondly: Was it really removed from the doctrine of God by being kept in the context of the work of Christ? It is not going too far to say that Calvin would have been scandalized by a positive reply to either of these questions. For the simple reason that Calvin's so-called doctrine of God in Book I had a strong Christological content,'[17] and his treatment of the person and work of Christ was firmly rooted in a theocentric context.'[18] The tendency, therefore, to separate the doctrine of God from Christology is a distortion of Calvin's presentation. The doctrine of God did not conclude with Book I. Only the discussion of God as Creator did.'[19]

The problem of what influenced Calvin in the general restructuring of the *Institutes* may have some bearing on the suggestion that it was 'arranged...according to the pattern of the Apostle's Creed'.[20] Benoit agreed with this, but admitted that the parallelism was 'only relative'.[21] Another suggestion, that Calvin's order was 'evidently reflecting the structure of the Epistle to the Romans', is a much more plausible one, and could easily be

sufficient grounds for Calvin's separation of providence and predestination in the way he did.[22] But a more specific answer to this problem probably lies in Calvin's relating of the unchanging purpose for the *Institutes* to his own major distinction within the doctrine of God, introduced in the 1559 edition, that is, the *duplex cognitio dei*.

In creating the general categories of 'The Knowledge of God the Creator' and 'The Knowledge of God the Redeemer', it was a natural thing for Calvin to relate the doctrine of the providence of God to God's work as Creator for the reason which Calvin himself gave.[23] That must also be related to the fact that Calvin's original intention for the *Institutes* was that it should be a work designed 'to bend and direct...simple folk' in the pursuit of personal piety and godliness, as well as having the added benefit of being useful for the instruction of candidates for the ministry.[24] With such a primary, pastoral purpose in view, it was also the natural thing for Calvin to keep predestination at the place where the execution of the decree was manifest to man, that is in relation to the knowledge of God's saving will, rather than in its logical position from a systematic theological perspective.[25]

It must also be remembered that by placing predestination in the context of God's saving will, Calvin was not giving significance to it only in relation to the application of salvation, important as that was. He still defined it as 'God's eternal decree, by which he determined with himself what he willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition: rather eternal life is foreordained for some, eternal damnation for others. Therefore, as any man has been created to one or the other of these ends, we speak of him as predestined to life or death'.[26] Predestination, for Calvin, was still based in the eternal, immutable will of God, in 'his free

given mercy' with respect to the elect, and in 'his just and irreprehensible but incomprehensible judgment' with respect to the reprobate.[27] It was also still firmly related to creation and providence. Creation, the fall, and Christ as Mediator, were all placed under the eternal decree. It was clearly supralapsarian in character.[28]

In this connection Calvin recognized the importance of distinguishing between Christ as the eternal Son of God and Christ as Mediator. As Mediator, Christ was included in the decree as the mirror and instrument of election. But as the Son of God, he was included in the triune authorship of the decree.[29] Failure to recognize this distinction can lead to the conclusion that because Christ was the mirror and instrument of election, he therefore had 'no place in the framing of that divine purpose to election'. This argument posits 'a real difference between the *manner* of our election which is Christ, and the *cause* of our election which is the divine eternal purpose', and supposes that Christ was absent when God framed his purpose to elect. Consequently, 'for the primary ground of predestination, we have to penetrate into the *divinae sapientiae adyta*, where we find it lodged in an *arcanum consilium*. And it appears that into these deep counsels, Christ has not been admitted'.[30]

Such an interpretation of Calvin, needless to say, does grave injustice to his doctrine of God. Calvin carefully merged his Christology with the doctrine of the eternal decree in his New Testament expositions. He considered the good pleasure of the will of God, or God's eternal election, as the efficient cause of our salvation, and Christ himself was included as 'the author of election'.[31] But Christ was not only included as the efficient cause, he was also the material cause of salvation when he revealed the love behind the divine choice and in this was 'the second confirmation of the freedom of election'.*32* Calvin then continued with the

scholastic causal sequence by referring to the preaching of the gospel as the formal cause of salvation and the praise of God's grace as the final cause.[33] Muller, commenting on this, said that 'Calvin here provides much of the basis for the later doctrine of Calvinism which conceives of predestination in similar causal patterns and represents Christ as the foundation and material cause of election'.[34]

In no way can Calvin's location of the doctrine in his system be construed as a 'softening' of his supralapsarian, double predestinarian views. Calvin's statements are strong, clear, precise and unambiguous. It stretches the imaginitive faculty considerably to say that Calvin would have 'objected to placing predestination under the doctrine of God as some Protestant scholastics were to do', or that he would have regarded these 'scholastics' as 'impertinently precise'.[35] Calvin had an excellent opportunity of making such an objection when he perused Beza's *Tabula*, and when he received a letter from his colleague on July 29, 1555 in which Beza explained the reason for the order of his own work.[36] Calvin raised no objection whatsoever, then or later. Muller's conclusion is much more in keeping with the whole tenor of Calvin's approach when he stated that had Calvin been establishing a definitive order of *loci*, rather than an 'order of faith', he might well have placed election and predestination in the 'doctrine of God' in causal sequence.[37]

Calvin's choice of location for the doctrine of predestination, therefore, was primarily pastoral, and, intimately connected with that same purpose, was the close relationship in his thinking between predestination and the covenant. In relation to the purpose of his work, Calvin also declared that he thought it inopportune under 'The Knowledge of God the Creator' to discuss 'that covenant by which God adopted to himself the sons of Abraham, or that part of doctrine which has always separated believers from unbelieving folk'.[38] And, when he did arrive at the

appropriate place to discuss these doctrines, Calvin continued to emphasis that what separated believers from unbelieving folk was 'the decision of God's eternal election', which was manifested in the discriminatory nature of the preaching of the covenant of life.[39] The covenant was related chiefly, not 'with that knowledge which stops at the creation of the world', but with that which mounts 'up to Christ the Mediator'.[40] It was for the context of the accomplishment of redemption through the Mediator that Calvin reserved his discussion of the covenant.[41] And it was in the application of that covenanted redemption that the eternal election of God was made manifest.[42] In this respect Calvin's doctrines of predestination and the covenant belonged together. The one interpreted the other. Therefore, the development of Calvin's doctrine of the covenant probably had as much to do with the location of the doctrine of predestination as anything else.

The relationship of the covenant to the doctrine of election assumed a most important place in Calvin's thought with regard to the question of Israel's rejection and violation of the covenant.[43] If God's election was an irrevocable predestination to life, and Israel was 'chosen as his special people', how, he queried, could they be spoken of by the prophets as having fallen away from it. Furthermore, 'a freely given covenant' had been made with Israel, and the blessings of the covenant bestowed upon her were identified as 'the fruits of election'.[44]

Calvin's response to this problem was to affirm 'two degrees' in the election of God. There was a general election of Israel as a nation and as a people, and with them God's covenant was made. But within that people was God's 'hidden' elect, 'individual persons to whom God not only offers salvation but so assigns it that the certainty of its effect is not in suspense or doubt'.[45] The same distinction appeared again and again in the *Commentaries*

and *Sermons*. On Ezkeiel 16:21, he wrote: 'There was a twofold election of God, since speaking generally he chose the whole family of Abraham. For circumcision was common to all, being the symbol and seal of adoption...this was one kind of adoption or election. But the other was secret, because God took to himself out of that multitude those whom he wished: and these are the sons of promise'.[46]

It was God's secret election which ensured that 'God's covenant should not be extinguished', when he threatened the children of Israel with destruction. Those thus chosen could also suffer in the general chastisement of the nation, but they were exempt from the ultimate punishment of separation from God.[47] The reason for this was that the elect within the elect were spiritually regenerated and had received the spirit of adoption. They had a new heart and a new spirit; others who had shown ingratitude to God when offered the covenant of salvation were rejected and disowned as children.[48] Because of this double election, the people of the covenant or the church was always a mixed community to be patiently endured.[49]

Those who were rejected demonstrated their non-election by covenant-breaking. This was illustrated vividly in the case of Ishmael and Esau. They were of the race of Abraham, and in them the 'covenant had been equally sealed by the sign of circumcision', but they were cut off from adoption 'for the condition had been laid down that they should faithfully keep God's covenant, which they faithlessly violated'.[50] Such would have been the case with all the children of Israel had it not been for God's secret election of those in whom his purpose of election would stand and his covenant would be fulfilled. Calvin explained: 'Where God has made a covenant of life and calls any people to himself, *a special mode of election is employed for a part of them*, so that he does not with indiscriminate grace elect all.... It is easy to explain why the general election of a people is not always firm and

effectual: to those with whom God makes a covenant, he does not at once give the spirit of regeneration that would enable them to perservere in the covenant to the very end. Rather the outward change, without the working of inner grace which might have availed to keep them is intermediate between the rejection of mankind and the election of a meagre number of the godly'.[51]

In another place Calvin distinctly spelt out the privileges of Israel as an elect and covenanted people alongside the dangers of covenant-breaking. God, he said, 'wished to be, in a special manner, called "The God of Israel" and that they should bear the name of "His people".' To this end they were elected and chosen from among all the nations of the earth and blessed by being brought into covenantal relationship with him, in order 'that they should never recognize any other Lord, nor receive any other God. This covenant was confirmed and ratified by the Testament and Witness which he gave them as a surety'.[52] But just as Gentiles were blind to the light of natural law in creation, so many Jews, in spite of their covenantal blessings, became blind to the light and admonitions of the law and the prophets, and instead of giving glory to God, they engaged in idolatry and became 'the prostituting traitress' (*traitresse maquerelle*).[53]

Calvin, in other words, differentiated clearly between the covenant made with Israel as an elect people and the election to eternal life of a number from within Israel. This was also the essence of his argument in the *Commentary on Romans*: 'God's condescension in making a covenant of life with a single nation is indeed a remarkable illustration of undeserved mercy, but his hidden grace is more evident in the second election, which is restricted to a part of the nation only'.[54] Because the covenant was a manifestation of God's mercy, it was not therefore a pointless or 'vain and unprofitable' thing. It promised and bestowed considerable blessings, and it was

God's means of 'gathering his church from Abraham's children'. At this level the covenant, for Calvin, corresponded largely to the general election of Israel, and a difference was made between those who were in covenant as a people and those who were predestinated to life as the hidden or secret elect.[55]

General election and the covenant pertained to Israel as a nation to whom the offer of salvation was made indiscriminately. The special or secret election pertained to individuals within the nation to whom salvation in the covenant was not only offered but assigned and guaranteed. Milner was right to say that 'It is possible, then, for an individual to live within the scope of the covenant, and yet not be among the elect'. But Milner went on to say that Calvin limited the idea of the covenant to the general election and to the 'offer' of salvation.[56] This requires clarification. Certainly Calvin saw the covenant respecting the nation as distinct from the election of God: 'As the blessing of the covenant separates the Israelitic nation from all other people, so the election of God makes a distinction between men in that nation, while he predestinates some to salvation and others to eternal condemnation'.[57] Thus Calvin could add: 'The covenant of grace is common to hypocrites and true believers', but Calvin clearly signified that this was 'with respect to its outward calling', and not 'with respect to spiritual regeneration'.[58]

The connection between the general election of Israel and the true children of God within it was a very close one, according to Calvin. The general elect he depicted as the church or mother appointed by God for the nurture of his true children, who would submit to his government, whereas hypocrites or covenant-breakers would not.[59] The covenant pertained to both, but properly it existed for and was the peculiar property of the secret elect. While the offer of salvation was provided in the covenant for all,

hypocrites included, salvation itself was provided in the covenant for the elect.

It is important when Calvin speaks of the covenant as promise to distinguish between those who received the promise and those in whom the promise was realized or fulfilled, that is, those who were the true children of promise. In his *Commentary on Genesis*, referring to Romans 8:9, Calvin spoke of illegitimate children who had received the promise of the covenant, but who were not the children of promise: 'For there, the promise is not taken generally for that outward word, by which God conferred his favour as well upon the reprobate as upon the elect; but must be restricted to that efficacious calling, which he inwardly seals by his Spirit. And that this is the case is proved without difficulty; for the promise by which the Lord had adopted them all as children, was common to all: and in that promise it cannot be denied that eternal salvation was offered to all.... Paul...is no longer reasoning about external offered grace, but about that of which the elect effectually partake. Here, then, a twofold class of sons presents itself to us, in the Church'.[60] In other words, those who received the promise of the covenant were regarded as being in the covenant generally, but those in whom the promise was fulfilled were in the covenant properly and specifically.

It is therefore not only proper to speak of a general and a secret election in Calvin's theology, it is also appropriate to speak of a general and a secret application of the covenant. It is this distinction which Hoekema failed to recognize when he insisted that the covenant of grace was *only* 'something intermediate' between the rejection of mankind and particular election. This was true, in a general sense, as Calvin himself said, but Calvin's view of grace was too closely aligned with his view of election to leave the concept of a covenant of *grace* at such a general level, and not extend it to the

particular aspect as well. This he specifically did when he spoke of two degrees of grace corresponding to the two degrees of election, as well as to the two degrees of promise.[61] Hoekema's charge that Calvin's successors, especially Ursinus in his *Catechesis Major* (1561) and Olevianus in his *De Substantia* (1585), 'outpredestinated' Calvin himself by identifying the covenant of grace with the elect is without foundation. He nearly admitted this himself when he concluded that 'the covenant of grace as historically manifest includes more than the elect, though it only reaches its goal in the elect'.[62] The covenant of grace could not be limited in Calvin's thought to the general calling of Israel because he recognized a provision in the covenant which was only for the hidden elect.

Eenigenburg was nearer the truth when, referring to the particularity of election and grace, he said that 'the totality of the elect is coterminous with the totality of persons in the covenant'.[63] Calvin may not have used the term 'hidden' or 'secret covenant', but the evidence shows that the covenant related in a particular and special way to the hidden elect, which did not apply to the general election of Israel. Calvin's constant identification of the covenant with adoption is significant in this respect. When speaking of actual election or the election of the individual, he said: 'The adoption was put in Abraham's hands. Nevertheless, because many of his descendants were cut off as rotten members, we must, in order that election may be effectual and truly enduring, ascend to the Head, in whom the Heavenly Father has gathered his elect together, *and has joined them to himself by an indissoluble bond*'.[64] Here Calvin's covenantal view of adoption and binding was related specifically to the 'inner' elect. Calvin not only spoke of degrees of election, but of 'distinct degrees of adoption', that is, the general adoption of the children of Abraham according to the flesh ('the gratuitous adoption of God belongs to them all in common'), and the particular

adoption of those who were the children of promise (ie. those 'esteemed legitimate children').[65]

Calvin's frequent contrast of those in whom the spiritual reality of the covenant was fulfilled with those who were merely concerned with its material benefits, supports the view that Calvin had in mind two degrees of covenant as well as two degrees of adoption and election. This was clearly indicated in the manner in which Gentiles could embrace the substance of 'that everlasting covenant on which the salvation was founded' without belonging to the elect of Israel.[66]

But the distinction was evident within Israel as well. The covenant made with Abraham and his descendants 'was a spiritual covenant', said Calvin, 'not confirmed in reference to the present life only'.[67] But many stood only in an external relation to it, with the mark or token of outward profession. God's inscription of his covenant in the flesh, circumcision, was 'a solemn memorial of that adoption, by which the family of Abraham had been elected to be the peculiar people of God. Beyond that, however, the promise of saving grace was included in it, and this was realized only by those who kept the covenant not by any meritorious obedience of their own, but through the 'faith that answers to it',[68] that is, those who were efficaciously called and whose hearts were circumcised and sealed by the inward operation of the Holy Spirit.[69]

In this connection, Calvin's statement that 'Ishmael had at first obtained equal rank with his brother Isaac, for in him the spiritual covenant had been equally sealed by the sign of circumcision' must be interpreted in the light of the twofold sealing as explained by Calvin.[70] The covenant contained the promise of eternal, spiritual reality. Ishmael received the promise or offer of eternal life, but for him that promise had no spiritual significance. The covenant remained an outward, external thing, sealed only in the flesh. For Isaac it became an

inner spiritual reality, sealed by the Spirit in the heart. One was born after the letter only, the other was born of the Spirit and belonged to the spiritual kingdom of Christ.[71] One was a legitimate child of the covenant, the other an 'illegitimate' child of the covenant before God.[72]

These two degrees of covenant corresponded to the letter/spirit distinction in Calvin's interpretation of the law, and were actually referred to in the context of the Pauline discussion of Isaac and Ishmael as the two covenants.[73] It is in this same context that Calvin's references to two degrees of grace to his people are to be understood. In the *Institutes* he spoke of 'God's more special grace' being evident in his 'more limited degree of election' in those from among the race of Abraham whom he kept 'among his sons by cherishing them in the church'. Again in his *Sermons on Deuteronomy*, speaking of 'a double election of God', he said, it was 'necessary that God add a second grace', which distinguished those who received the spiritual good offered in the covenant from the general body of those who had received only the outward seal of the covenant in the flesh.[74]

This same distinction of two degrees of election, adoption, and covenant, Calvin carried over into the church in the New Testament. The same situation persisted. He spoke of the generality of the promises which did not make salvation common to all, and distinguished this general offer of salvation from 'the peculiar revelation' confined only to the elect. The 'common election' was not effectual in all who made up the visible church. It functioned rather 'to set open a gate for the special elect'.[75] Paul, according to Calvin, applied the reference to Ishmael to hypocrites in the church. Some might object to this, said Calvin, and ask how such were constituted as being 'born of God's covenant and are regarded as in the Church'. His reply was that 'they are not strictly God's children but are degenerate and

spurious, and are disclaimed by God whom they falsely call Father'.[76] Here again Calvin distinguished between 'general' and 'special' election, the former applying to the visible church and the latter to the invisible church.[77] Just as many Jews, within the external sphere of the covenant, violated the covenant and fell away, so it was possible for members of the visible church to do likewise. No rash confidence was to be reposed in outward membership and signs of the covenant. Baptism could be no more than an unprofitable sign of general election apart from inner grace and coming to faith.[78] Such church members could also be cut off though previously elected.[79]

Calvin's chief example of covenant-breakers in the non-Jewish context was the Church of Rome. His frequent references to the defection and apostasy of Rome was always within the covenantal context. Rome had violated the covenant and ceased to be a true church. The externals of the covenant still remained in her, but they had lost their true significance. Recovery could only come by way of repentance and return to the spiritual reality of the covenant. The reformers claimed to be returning to that reality in a new marriage contract with God.[80]

But hypocrites were not confined to the church of Rome. Calvin complained of those within the reformation church whose profession was no more than a 'nod only' to the gospel. He declared that there were many hypocrites and 'much chaff mixed with the wheat' in the Reformed cause.[81] Calvin identified three classes of people in this category. They could be the children of believers who had grown up to neglect or despise the true nature of the covenant and were content with external things only. Or they could be those who had hypocritically joined the church by feigning piety and deceiving others by their profession. Or again they may be folk who were sincere enough, but who only had temporary faith and mistakenly thought themselves to be true believers.[82] All these

would be cut off, or fall and slip away, from the covenant.

On the other hand, 'individuals whose election is unchangeable, since it is based on the eternal purpose of God', were within the visible structure of the church as those in whom the covenant of grace proper was manifest. In times of declension in the history of the church even those of the true election had also wandered away and appeared for a time to be strangers to the hope of salvation. The difference, however, between these and the reprobate was that the inner seal (II Tim. 2:19) remained, and they were restored to repentance.[83] Their fall was not permanent. Their salvation was certain, though there was no room for complacency in their attitude or behaviour.[84] 'Thus', concluded Calvin, 'God promises that he will be merciful throughout all generations towards the sons of the saints, while giving no ground to hypocrites for vain assurance, for their boasting in the fatherhood of God is rash and empty, they are a degenerate stock of saints, they have fallen away from their piety and faith'.[85]

Calvin, then, held to a doctrine of the general election of Israel and of the New Testament church, which was external, public and observable. Within these communities he taught that there was a secret election of individuals that was internal, spiritual and hidden. Many hypocrites and unfaithful were to be found within the general elect, and Calvin warned against rash attempts to distinguish them.[86] At the same time he allowed that such usually became manifest eventually, and that then it was possible to 'distinguish the true from the spurious children, by the respective marks of faith and unbelief'.[87] True faith and its fruits of obedience were the evidences of being in the elect. Those secretly elected were in God's heart before they were born,[88] but their election began to be effected in time when they were called by God to faith.[89] This 'effectual calling' of the secret elect

was distinguished by Calvin from the general outward calling of the public elect.[90] The effectiveness of this calling was secured by the inward regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.[91]

For Calvin the crucial factor in regeneration by the Spirit was the impartation of faith: 'Faith is a heavenly gift...not a cold bare knowledge, for none can believe except he be re-formed by the Spirit of God...faith is itself the work of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in none but the children of God...faith is a part of our regeneration, and entering into the Kingdom of God...when the Lord breathes faith into us he regenerates us in a hidden and secret way that is unknown to us'.[92] For the believer this led, to use Milner's phrase, to 'the realization that the covenantal promise is *pro me*'.[93] This was the point at which the secret eternal election of God began to be effected and made manifest.[94]

And for Calvin effectual calling and true faith were inseparable from sanctification and a new life of obedience. When election began to be effected, he said, 'that effect is sanctification, even effectual calling, when faith is added to the outward preaching of the gospel, which faith is begotten by the inward movement of the Spirit'.[95] Again, he declared, 'God illuminates no man with the spirit of faith whom he does not also regenerate into newness of life'.[96] It was in this way that the promise of the covenant was appropriated. This living faith and the accompanying sanctification of the Spirit became the 'signs or tokens of our election', and the assurance of being in the covenant proper.[97]

Because of the manner in which Calvin related the covenant to the doctrine of predestination and election, it is difficult to see how his successors could have invented covenantal theology in order to undermine or soften his predestination in the way that has been alleged.[98] It is equally difficult to agree that in the theology of the

covenant 'Predestination does not play so important a role as is usual in Reformed theology' because 'the emphasis is on man's role'.[99]

The conclusion of this research is more in agreement with Hoekema at this point when he warned that the doctrine of the covenant must not 'be thought of as an attempt to find a theological escape-hatch whereby one can get away from the rigorous harshness of the doctrine of predestination. For all three...[ie. Zwingli, Bullinger and Calvin] the covenant doctrine was taught along with a firm and uncompromising insistence on the doctrine of election'.[100] Baker's contention that a different view of the covenant (unilateral *versus* bilateral) in Calvin and Bullinger was due to Calvin's double predestination as against Bullinger's single predestination lacks solid evidence. Both held double predestinarian views. Even if Bullinger had held a single predestinarian view, Baker's thesis that this necessitated a purely bilateral concept of covenant because the reprobate were responsible for their own rejection would still not stand. As Bierma has observed, 'it is difficult to see...how these two views of reprobation affect the conditionality of the covenant'.[101] Bullinger, like Calvin, never taught that the wills of the reprobate were ever free to love God and do good or that they were capable of exercising faith which is the condition of the covenant.[102] Both reformers clearly taught that only the elect were gifted with that ability by the divine Spirit.[103] One view of predestination does not affect the fulfilling of the conditions of the covenant any more than the other.

NOTES: Chapter Eleven

1 Calvin, *Inst.*, III.21.1.

2 *Com.on Ps.*, 89:3.

3 *Com.on Rom.*, 9:6-7; 11:28-29.

4 Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, 166.

5 Calvin, *Inst.*, I.13.14.

6 *Inst.*, I.15.8.

7 *Inst.*, I.16.4.

8 *Inst.*, II.3.10.

9 McNeill, ed. *Inst.*, II.10.1 n.1.

10 Calvin, *Inst.*, II.10.1.

11 Niesel, *op.cit.*, 159.

12 *Inst.* (1539), *CR*, 30.861; cf. I.16-18 and III.21-24; For discussion see Wendel, *Calvin*, 267-269; Niesel, *op.cit.*, 159-169; Dowey, *The Knowledge of God*, 186-188; P. Jacobs, *Prädestination und Verantwortlichkeit bei Calvin*, (Neukirchen, 1937), 41ff,64,66,71,92,147; Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, 88-91; McKinnon, *Calvin and the Reformation*, 247-251; B.A. Gerrish, *Reformers in Profile*, (Philadelphia, 1967), 157ff; Bray, *Theodore Beza's Doctrine of Predestination*, 44ff; J.W. Beardslee III, ed. *Reformed Dogmatics*, (New York, 1965), 16-18; Armstrong, *The Amyraut Heresy*, 161-163; Muller, 'Predestination and Christology', 44-52; D.N. Wiley, 'Calvin's Doctrine of Predestination: His Principal Soteriological and Polemical Doctrine'. PhD Thesis (Duke University, 1971), 164.

13 cf.*Inst.* (1539-1554), *CR*, 29.861-902 and *Inst.* (1559), III.19-21.

14 *Inst.*, I.16.1.

15 Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus*, 3.156-163; Hunter, *op.cit.*, 88,130; McKinnon, *op.cit.*, 247-251.

16 Wendel, *op.cit.*, 268.

17 *Inst.*, I.13.

18 *Inst.*, II.12-15.

19 This is commonly inferred. Wendel, *op.cit.*, 268; Hall, 'Calvin and the Calvinists', 27.

20 Hall, *op.cit.*, 23.

21 Benoît, 'The History and Development', 109.

22 J.I.PACKER 'Calvin the Theologian', *John Calvin*, ed. G.E Duffield, 157-158; Wendel, *op.cit.*, 115.

23 Calvin, *Inst.*, I.16.1; see above.

24 *Inst.*, 'John Calvin to the Reader 1559', 1.3-5; 'Subject Matter of the Present Work: From the French Edition of 1560', 1.6-8; and see I.2.1-2.

25 *Inst.*, III.22.1.

26 *Inst.*, III.21.5.

27 *Inst.*, III.21.7.

28 *Inst.*, III.22.2; III.23.7,9; *Articuli de Praedestinatione*, in *CR*, 37.713-714.

29 *Inst.*, III.24.5; III.22.7; *Com.on John*, 13:18; 17:8-10; *Et.Pred.*, in CR, 36.272-273,318-321 (Reid 71,126-130).

30 Reid, *Et.Pred.*, 'Intro.' 40; cf. 'The Office of Christ in Predestination', *SJT*, 1. (1948), 5-19, 166-188.

31 Calvin, *Com.on Eph.*, 1:4-5; *Com.on John*, 13:18; 15:16; cf. *Com.on Mal.*, 1:2-6.

32 *Com.on Eph.*, 1:4-5.

33 *Com.on Eph.*, 1:5,8.

34 Muller, 'Predestination and Christology', 75.

35 Bray, *op.cit.*, 49, citing Ritschl, *op.cit.*, 3.163; Hall, *op.cit.*, 27.

36 'Beza to Calvin, July 29, 1555', *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*, Letter 64, 1.169-173.

37 Muller, *op.cit.*, 76.

38 Calvin, *Inst.*, I.6.1.

39 *Inst.*, III.21.1.

40 *Inst.*, I.10.1.

41 *Inst.*, II.9-17.

42 *Et.Pred.*, in *CR* 36.278, 281-282, 289, 301-302 (Reid 78-79, 82-83, 91-92, 106-108).

43 *Inst.*, III.21.5-9 and *Com.on Rom.*, 9-11 are the principal passages in this connection.

44 *Inst.*, III.21.5; cf. *Com.on Amos*, 3:2.

45 *Inst.*, III.21.7.

46 *Comm.on Ezk.*, 16:21; cf. 11:16-17; 18:25; *Com.on Gen.*, 17:7; 25:23ff; *Com.on Hos.*, 12:3-5; *Com.on Joel*, 2:32; *Com.on Mal.*, 1:2-6; *Ser.on Deut.*, 439 (10:15-17).

47 *Com.on Ezk.*, 8:18; 9:3-4; 11:17; 14:14; 16:3; *Inst.*, III.21.7; *Har.of Pent.*, 2.112(Dt.5:9); *Com.on Ps.*, 74:1;

79:1; *Com. on Isa.*, 27:8; *Com. on Obad.*, 17; *Com. on Zech.*, 14:6-7.

48 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:7; 21:11-12; 25:29; *Com. on Ezk.*, 11:19-20; *Com. on Hos.*, 12:3-5.

49 *Com. on Isa.*, 4:3.

50 *Inst.*, III.21.6.

51 *Inst.*, III.21.7 (my itals.); cf. *Com. on Mal.*, 1:2-3.

52 *Christ the End of the Law*, 6-7.

53 *Ibid.*, 8.

54 *Com. on Rom.*, 9:6; cf. *Et. Pred.*, in *CR*, 281-282 (Reid 82).

55 *Ibid.* cf. *Har. of Pent.*, 4.340-341 (Dt. 32:5); *Com. on Jer.*, 28:1-3; *Comm. on Ezk.*, 13:9; 20:40.

56 Milner, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Church*, 55.

57 Calvin, *Com. on Rom.*, 9:11.

58 *Har. of Pent.*, 4:342 (Dt. 32:6).

59 *Com. on Isa.*, 44:5.

60 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:7.

61 Hoekema, 'Calvin's Doctrine', 6-7; 'The Covenant of Grace', 150-153; see Calvin, *Inst.*, III.21.6; *Ser. on Deut.*, 439 (10:15-17).

62 *Ibid.*, 11.

63 Eenigenburg, 'The Place of the Covenant', 7.

64 Calvin, *Inst.*, III.21.7.

65 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:7; cf. *Com. on Ezk.*, 16:21.

66 *Com. on John*, 10:16.

67 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:7.

68 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:9.

69 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:7, 13.

70 *Inst.*, III.21.6.

71 *Comm. on Gen.*, 21:11-12; cf. 25:23f, 29.

72 *Inst.*, III.22.4; *Com. on Gen.*, 17:7; *Com. on Jer.*, 22:24.

73 *Com. on Gen.*, 4:24,29.

74 *Inst.*, III.21.6; *Ser. on Deut.*, 439 (10:15-17); cf. *Com. on Rom.*, 9:6 where he speaks of 'hidden grace' as distinct from general grace.

75 *Com. on Rom.*, 10:16; *Com. on Acts*, 3:25; cf. *Har. of Gosp.*, 2.169(Mt.15:24); *Com. on John*, 6:40; 13:18; 15:16; 17:6f; *Com. on Phil.*, 4:3.

76 *Ibid.*; cf. *Com. on Ezk.*, 18:24; *Com. on Joel*, 2:32.

77 *Inst.*, III.22.6; IV.1.7; *Har. of Gosp.*, 2.76-77(Mt.13:39); *Com. on Rom.*, 11:22-24; *Com. on II Tim.*, 2:19.

78 *Ser. on Deut.*, 439 (10:15-17).

79 *Com. on Rom.*, 11:17; cf. *Com. on I Cor.*, 10:12-14; *Ser. on II Tim.*, 2:19.

80 *Inst.*, IV.11.1-2; cf. III.22.4; *Com. on Gen.*, 21:12; Com. on Jer., 14:20; *Com. on Ezk.*, 16:20-21; *Com. on Dan* 3:29; *Com. on Hos.*, 1:10; 2:4-5,20; 4:12; 6:6-7; *Com. on Mic.*, 2:6-8.

81 *Com. on Zeph.*, 1:3; *Inst.*, III.24.8-9; *Com. on Ezk.*, 13:2; *Com. on Mic.*, 3:11; *Com. on Rom.*, 11:29; *Contra* C.J. Sommerville, 'Conversion *versus* the Early Puritan Covenant of Grace', 180, who says that Calvin throughout his works only thought of the damned in terms of 'Turks and other profane nations'.

82 *Inst.*, III.24.8; *Com. on Ps.*, 106:12; *Har. of Gosp.*, 2.131-132(Lk.17:13); *Com. on I John*, 2:19.

83 *Inst.*, IV.1.26; *Com. on Gen.*, 17:7; *Com. on Ps.*, 63:8; *Comm. on Ezk.*, 18:24; *Har. of Gosp.*, 2.12, 131-132(Lk.7:35; 17:13); *Com. on John*, 20:23; *Com. on I John*, 3:9.

84 *Inst.*, III.24.7; *Har. on Pent.*, 3.239-243(Lev.26:39-41); *Com. on Ezk.*, 13:9.

85 *Har. of Gosp.*, 1.36-37(Lk.1:49); cf. *Har. of Pent.*, 1.444-448(Dt.13:3); *Com. on Ps.*, 69:28; *Com. on Hos.*, 11:8-9; *Com. on Amos*, 5:19-20; *Com. on Nah.*, 1:7.

86 *Com. on Jer.*, 17:17-18; 20:12; *Com. on I Pet.*, 1:2.

87 *Com. on Gen.*, 17:7; *Com. on Rom.*, 10:17.

88 *Com. on John*, 10:8.

89 *Inst.*, III.24.1; *Com. on Gal.*, 1:15; *Com. on I Th.*, 1:4; *Com. on I Pet.*, 1:2.

90 *Com. on Isa.*, 5:3; *Com. on Amos*, 5:4-6; *Com. on Joel*, 2:32.

91 *Inst.*, III.21.7; III.24.2; *Com. on Isa.*, 53:1; *Com. on Ezk.*, 20:12; *Com. on Hos.*, 12:3-5; *Har. of Gosp.*, 3.69(Mt.23:37); *Com. on Acts*, 13:48.

92 *Com. on John*, 1:13; cf. 6:35; 14:7; *Com. on Acts*, 5:32.

93 Milner, *op. cit.*, 61.

94 Calvin, *Com. on John*, 10:16.

95 *Com. on I. Pet.*, 1:1

96 *Com. on Acts*, 20:21; cf. *Inst.*, III.2.8; *Com. on John*, 8:36.

97 *Com. on Rom.*, 10:17; *Com. on Phil.*, 1:6; *Com. on II. Th.*, 2:13; *Com. on I Pet.*, 1:2.

98 Dorner, *History of Protestant Theology*, 2.41-42; Miller, 'The Marrow', 85; *New England Mind*, 375; 'Preparation for Salvation', 257; Brown, 'Covenant Theology', 223.

99 Emerson, 'Calvin and Covenant Theology', 137.

100 Hoekema, 'Calvin's Doctrine', 2; 'The Covenant of Grace', 148-153.

101 Bierma, 'Federal Theology: Two Traditions?', 316.

102 Bullinger, *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*, IX.2-3; VIII.2, Schaff, *Creeds*, 3.249-250, 247.

103 *Ibid.*, XVI.2, Schaff, *Creeds*, 3.268.

CHAPTER TWELVE

John Calvin: Conclusion

The importance of the covenant in Calvin's thought is incontestable in view of its place in the areas researched. Other areas barely mentioned, such as the Christian life, union with Christ, the Church, the sacraments and civil government, merit more detailed consideration with respect to the covenant.' Evaluation of the ground covered, however, should suffice to answer some of the questions posed earlier.

Was Calvin a 'covenant theologian'? The answer to that also is both negative and positive. It is negative in the sense that Calvin did not make the covenant the key to his system any more than the doctrines of predestination and law. Again it is negative if the definition of covenantal theology requires the theologian to use specific terms, such as 'covenant of works' or 'covenant of redemption'. It is also negative if it is insisted that, in order to qualify as a covenantal theologian, some or all of the theologian's works must be organized specifically around the theme of the covenant so as to include the nomenclature in its title or chapter headings. On the other hand, the answer is positive in the sense that all the basic *ideas* of what is normally designated 'covenant theology' are to be found in his works. It is positive if a covenantal theologian is someone who has built the idea of the covenant into his entire thought in a pervasive manner, so as to include it not only in theological tracts and treatises, but in commentaries and sermons as well. It is also positive if to have the covenant as an essential and vital part of the theological structure is allowed as a valid criterion.

Emerson rightly observed that 'many of the

implications of covenant thinking...are present in Calvin's teaching'.[2] He was speaking in the limited context of the conversion process in his article, but his statement stands in a much wider field. He also made the pertinent comment that scholars have often made the 'unfortunate error', when comparing Calvin with later 'covenant theologians', of using Calvin's *Institutes* against the sermon materials of the latter, whereas a fairer comparison would consider Calvin's sermons in addition to his other writings.[3] The wisdom of this observation is borne out not only with respect to Miller and the New England context, with which Emerson was chiefly interacting. It applies equally to the off-hand manner in which Baker dismissed Hoekema's 'quotations from Calvin's "Sermons on Deuteronomy" (1555-1556) to prove that Calvin taught a conditional covenant'.[4] These sermons were preached at what was probably the peak of Calvin's public ministry, and reflect his mature thought on the subject. Evidence like this cannot be shrugged off so lightly, especially when it is widely supported from Calvin's other writings, particularly his commentaries, as has been demonstrated.

Calvin took up all the points raised by Oecolampadius, Zwingli, and Bullinger, and expounded and applied them in considerably more detail than his predecessors had ever done. He painstakingly demonstrated throughout his works the unity and continuity of the covenant. He showed the harmony of law and gospel in the context of the covenant. He explained both the unilateral and bilateral significance of the covenant. He related the covenant to his doctrine of predestination and election, thereby showing the twofold application of the covenant in relation to the visible church, and the 'hidden' elect of God. Calvin may not have written a specific treatise on the subject or used it as a separate category in his systematic work, but it can be said that the doctrine of the covenant pervades his theology and

interacts with other doctrines in a very impressive manner. It was not just a case that Calvin 'found it necessary to speak about the covenant' because it popped up in biblical references.[5] Calvin saw the covenant as an integral part of God's dealings with his people and so it became for him a fundamental concept in his overall theological construction.

It was also discovered that while the term 'covenant of works' was not found in the writings of any of the Swiss reformers, the idea was becoming more and more pronounced in each one. Calvin, especially, has all the ingredients of the idea. He viewed the Edenic relationship as essentially a 'gracious' one (distinguishing grace before and after the fall), expressed in a legal manner, binding Adam to God under the promise of life for obedience and the threat of death for disobedience. Because of the essential condescension of God and the gracious nature of the arrangement, the idea of meriting life by obedience constituted no difficulty for Calvin. Obedience was man's duty as a creature and no reward for it was ever deserved, but nevertheless God condescended to bind himself to do just that.

One other piece of evidence concerning the Edenic arrangement needs to be considered from Calvin's teaching on the sacraments, which when placed in the overall context of his views on the relationship between Adam and God is highly significant and more than just an oblique reference. Describing the real nature of the sacraments in order to prove the falsity of Rome's five other ceremonies, Calvin defined a sacrament as 'a seal by which God's covenant, or promise, is sealed.'[6] Quoting Augustine, he said that for a sacrament to be a sacrament the Word of God must precede, and that the physical thing, designed or shaped by God alone, was a token of his lawful authority, testifying concerning himself through his own Word. Now the interesting thing is that Calvin specifically applied this

definition to the Edenic and post-diluvian situations.

God, said Calvin, 'gave Adam and Eve the tree of life as a guarantee of immortality that they might assure themselves of it as long as they should eat of its fruit'.[7] This corresponded exactly to his view of the Lord's supper in his *Commentary on I Corinthians*: 'By reason of the connection between word and sign, the covenant of the Lord really is bound up with the sacraments, and the term covenant (*foedus*) bears a relation to us, and embraces us. This will be of great value in understanding the nature of the sacraments, for, if they are covenants, then they contain promises which may awaken men's consciences to an assurance of salvation'.[8] The only difference was that for Adam and Eve it was not the assurance of salvation that was involved, but the assurance of the continuance of life.

In the same way, Calvin continued, God gave Noah the rainbow as a token of preservation, and the tree and the rainbow were 'regarded as sacraments'. It was not that these could preserve life or give immortality themselves, 'but because they had a mark engraved upon them by God's Word, so that they were proofs and seals of his covenants'.[9] The tree remained a tree, but when 'inscribed by God's Word' a new form was put upon it, so that it became something which it was not previously. Here Calvin specifically called the tree the sacramental sign of a covenant. And in it the assurance of life was promised to Adam for obedience to God's commandment.

In his *Commentary on Genesis* when dealing with the verses to which he had referred in the *Institutes*, Calvin drew the same conclusion. Just as God gave to us 'the attestation of his grace by external symbols', so the tree was to Adam 'a symbol and memorial of the life which he had received from God'.[10] Calvin agreed with Augustine and Eucherius that it 'was a figure of Christ, inasmuch as he is the Eternal Word of God'. Concerning the expulsion from the garden, Calvin added: 'We know what is the

efficacy of sacraments; and it was said above that the tree of life was given as a pledge of life. Wherefore, that he might understand himself to be deprived of his former life, a solemn excommunication is added; not that the Lord would cut him off from all hope of salvation, but by taking away what he had given, would cause man to seek new assistance elsewhere', that is, by the death of Christ.'[11] Calvin drew a parallel between that excommunication and the apostle Paul's reference to those who were 'strangers to the covenants', showing that they were excluded not only from the 'token' of the promise, but from that which the promise signified.'[12] In other words, for fallen man life could no longer come by that promise or covenant, it must come from a new promise - a new covenant.

It was said earlier that the specific term 'covenant of works' was absent from Calvin's works with respect to the pre-fall state. This can still be maintained, but it cannot be held that the word 'covenant' was not used with respect to Adam's relationship with God, or that the word 'works' is inappropriate in describing the obedience to God's commandments required of Adam.

Calvin had no specific chapter such as Bullinger had in *De Testamento* on the use of covenantal terminology. But in a couple of places he did pause to make some comment on the subject and these need to be considered. McNeill and Battles drew attention to Calvin's use of covenantal terms at one point in the *Institutes*. On Calvin's exposition of the second difference between the Testaments, especially on his reference to the ceremonies of the Old Testament representing Christ, they comment: 'In this section and elsewhere Calvin uses the words *testamentum* and *foedus* interchangeably, as they are in the Vulgate. The Scripture words are בְּרִית and *διαθήκη*. Both Latin words are here ordinarily translated 'covenant' except in Scripture quotations and where *testamentum* evidently refers to one of the parts of Scripture'.[13] In the section referred to,

Calvin's discussion focused on the *Epistle to the Hebrews* which he cited eleven times, and it is in his commentary on this epistle, and in the *Commentary on Galatians* that his comments on covenantal terms are to be found.

In the latter, Calvin said that by the use of *διαθήκη* 'the Greeks mean more often 'testament', though also sometimes any sort of contract'. He considered it a matter of indifference which translation was used in the particular passage under consideration, where Paul was simply reasoning from the less to the greater, arguing that if a covenant between men is so firm, how much more then the covenant between God and Abraham. But he proceeded in the next verse to speak of 'the substance of the covenant' with Abraham as being in Christ alone, and this promissory arrangement concerning the grace of God and faith, Calvin described as a 'contract' or 'agreement' (*pactum*). The interchangeable translation was clearly not confined to the matter of comparison.[14] Similar interchangeable use of *testamentum* and *foedus* can be found elsewhere in the same commentary, also with reference to the Abrahamic covenant.[15] Calvin, however, did recognize some difference in the terms. When he said that it mattered little which translation was used here, he added: 'The case is different in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the apostle undoubtedly refers to the testaments', and he cited Hebrews 9:7.

Calvin had nothing further to add when commenting on Hebrews 9:7, but when he came to verses 16-18 he took up the matter again: 'In Hebrew בְּרִית means a covenant but not a testament. In Greek *διαθήκη* includes both'. He maintained that the apostle was referring to the second meaning here (ie.testament), since he was speaking of ratification by the death of Christ. The question then arose: Was the apostle arguing the necessity of the death of Christ from an idea introduced later, that is, the idea of testament, which was not to be found in the Old

Testament establishing of a covenant? No, Calvin answered, for care must be taken not to place too much weight on the use of the word 'testament'. The apostle was not building his case on the use of an ambiguous Greek word, but on the fact of the covenant itself. He was not trying to draw a complete parallel between the meaning of Greek 'testament' and Hebrew 'covenant'. He was simply using an expression which could convey an important aspect of the biblical covenant. Therefore, 'It is no objection that God made the covenant with his people because the covenant was like a testament in this regard that it was ratified by blood...the covenant of God which was sealed with blood can be fitly compared to a testament because it has the same condition and character'.

What Calvin was saying, was that while generally speaking בְּרִית meant 'covenant' and not 'testament', the basic idea in a testament (ie. ratification by death) was also included in a covenant, because it too was ratified by blood.'[16] The apostle therefore, simply 'turned to his advantage a word offered to him in the language in which he wrote, just as someone speaking about the same covenant of God which is often called in Greek a *μαρτυρία* (testimony), would commend it among other things by giving it this title'.'[17]

Calvin, then, acknowledged a difference of meaning between the Hebrew usage of 'covenant' and the Greek 'testament'. In the context of the passage it is the Hebrew idea of covenant that is being used in relation to the death of Christ, but by introducing the idea of 'testament' the apostle appeared to be limiting the idea of covenant, and saying something that was not included in the Hebrew usage. But Calvin pointed out that the apostle did not intend any difference of meaning by using 'testament'. The word was legitmate enough because the same central idea was conveyed in both. As far as biblical usage was concerned one could stand for the other. There was no

hint of using 'testament' in a unilateral sense as opposed to 'covenant' in a bilateral sense. Both words carried the same message and as has been demonstrated already, Calvin saw that covenantal message as having both unilateral and bilateral aspects. Consequently, it is not surprising to find Calvin using *foedus* and *pactum* interchangeably with *testamentum*, and this explains why he could do so in discussing even the message of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* in the *Institutes*.[18] The different case which he referred to in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, was not in the nature of the covenant, but simply in the apostle's choice of words in order to commend a central truth of the covenant.

From Calvin's use of covenantal terminology surveyed in this research it is clear that he would have agreed with Eichrodt's conclusion that 'the *berith*, as part of its very nature, assumes the obligation, also, of the receiver, whereby he enters into the realm of the divine order and ordinance...*covenant and commandment belong together*'. We cannot, Eichrodt continued, 'emphasize God's sole initiative in giving the covenant and its character as grace and play this off against an obligation of the people in clear commandments.... It is apparently no contradiction that a communal relationship with mutual rights and duties can be seen at the same time as the gracious benefaction of the superior partner'.[19] The decalogue was the 'outline of a new life', an expression of 'covenant loyalty', introducing members of the covenant to the will of a Lord 'whom they came to know through obedience'. Only an active faith could understand the nature and will of God. The commandments, therefore, 'came from and always recall a liberating event, so they lead to a living reciprocity between the liberator and his chosen people...it is not a petty casuistic legalism which is mediated through the commandments; it is a matter of the major outlines of a way of life'.[20]

NOTES: Chapter Twelve

1 The doctrine of the union of Christ with the believer, in particular, was one of major importance throughout all of Calvin's writings, and he linked it directly to the covenant again and again (eg. *Inst.*, II.10.2; III.14.6). This is highly significant in view of the way in which Beza related these themes in his works. This will be considered more fully in the next chapter. On the importance of the covenant in relation to the doctrine of union with Christ in Reformed theology, see H. Martin, *The Atonement*, (Edinburgh, 1887), 38-46; D. MacLeod, 'Covenant 2', *BOT*, 141, (1975), 27-28.

2 Emerson, 'Calvin and Covenant Theology', 141.

3 *Ibid.*, 136.

4 Baker, *Bullinger and the Covenant*, 197.

5 Eenigenburg, 'The Place of the Covenant', 2.

6 Calvin, *Inst.*, IV.19.2.

7 *Inst.*, IV.14.18.

8 *Com.on I Cor.*, 11:25.

9 *Inst.*, IV.19.2; cf. Ussher, *Body of Divinitie*, 125-126.

10 *Com.on Gen.*, 2:9; cf. *Larger Catechism*, Q. 20; Ball, *Covenant of Grace*, 10.

11 Com.on Gen., 3:22

12 *Inst.*, IV.14.12; cf. *Com.on Col.*, 2:13.

13 McNeill, ed. *Inst.*, II.14.4, n.6.

14 Calvin, *Com.on Gal.*, 3:16.

15 *Com.on Gal.*, 4:24; cf. also 4:1.

16 *Com.on Heb.*, 9:16-17.

17 *Com.on Heb.*, 9:18.

18 *Inst.*, II.11.4; In addition to the references given above see II.10.23; II.11.1.

19 Eichrodt, 'Covenant and Law', 306, 310.

20 *Ibid.*, 311.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Theodore Beza and the Covenant

Theodore Beza (1519-1605), 'the gentleman from Vezelay',' educated at Paris, Orleans and Bourges, became Calvin's successor at Geneva in 1564. He was welcomed to Geneva by Calvin in 1548, when, following a physical and spiritual crisis, he abandoned 'country, family, friends and all in order to follow Christ'.[2] Viret secured for him a professorial post in Greek at Lausanne, where he taught for ten years before returning to Geneva as rector of the new academy. Calvin recognized in Beza an obvious successor and prepared him accordingly. Consequently, Calvin came to be esteemed by him as his 'father in that which God hath taught me'.[3] For forty years after Calvin's death, Beza consolidated the Calvinian reform in Geneva, and earned a wide reputation as a Reformed polemicist and a defender of French Protestantism.

While Beza's writings were translated and disseminated with amazing rapidity during his own lifetime,[4] he quickly fell into neglect, eclipsed by the reputation of his predecessor.[5] The first major study of Beza's theology appeared only a decade ago.[6] Gradually increasing interest has been shown in Beza's works and several aspects of his theology have been closely examined, particularly the doctrines of predestination, the Lord's supper and ecclesiology.[7]

The importance of Beza for this study lies in the fact that he has not only suffered neglect in the past, but in that he has also been seriously misrepresented. With the tendency in historical theology to alienate Calvin from the 'Reformed orthodoxy' of his successors, it became imperative to find someone to blame, and increasingly Beza was singled out as the culprit, 'who most directly and

powerfully influenced Reformed protestantism in this direction'.[8] The charge ranged from having 'distorted the balance' of Calvin's doctrine to having modified and altered it so that Beza's 'misunderstanding of Calvin produced a bastardized "Calvinism" rather than the theology of the Reformer himself'.[9] In contrast to Calvin's warm, humanistic, Christocentric, Biblical and soteriological approach to theology, especially to the doctrine of predestination, Beza was cold, theocentric, scholastic, supralapsarian and rationalistic. Thus, he became 'the father of hyper-Calvinism of Reformed orthodoxy',[10] whose theology in key areas 'substantially diverges from that of Calvin'.[11] It is further alleged that the theology of Moise Amyraut (Amyraldism) and that of Jacobus Arminius as well as later Federal theology were reactions against this Bezean scholastic orthodoxy which froze everything in the eternal decree, and that these were seeking to recapture 'some of the genius of Calvin's theology which had been lost by the logically constructed theologies of the orthodox'.[12]

This position, however, has been increasingly challenged by more recent studies. An ultra cautious attempt by J.S. Bray sought to show that 'the basic difference between Beza and Calvin in their treatment of predestination was that Beza was more of a systematizer'.[13] He disallowed the term 'Protestant scholastic' with reference to Beza, but his work nevertheless leaned heavily upon Kickel, Dantine and Armstrong, so that he still regarded Beza 'as a transitional figure who bridged the gap between Calvin's biblical theology and the rationalistic approach of Reformed orthodoxy'.[14] Jill Raitt's studies have been more forthright, demonstrating Beza's fidelity to Calvin in several areas and his 'effort to stabilize and thus to maintain Calvin's basic theology'.[15] She maintained that 'while Beza's method was often scholastic, he remained inspired by Calvin's doctrine and by that very

doctrine, was led frequently to the Scriptures to find there the substance of his teaching'.[16] She also drew attention to the danger of drawing strong conclusions with respect to the content of Beza's theology simply on the basis of the methodology employed.'[17] This is a vital point to remember in the study of Reformed development, as Reformed theologians, while deeply concerned about fidelity in the basic doctrines of the faith, saw no one method or structure as sacrosanct. R.W.A. Letham also took a cautious look at these issues, expressing in his thesis initial uncertainty as to whether Beza was responsible for the introduction of scholasticism, but he concluded that Beza became more rationalistic and scholastic in his later years.'[18] In a reassessment article, however, Letham conceded 'that many of the claims that Beza was the corruptor of Reformed theology by encouraging a wholesale abandonment of the theology and biblically oriented methodology of Calvin require revision'.[19] He still held, however, to the idea of a more scholastic tendency in later writings.

R.A. Muller's splendid study is perhaps the finest corrective to date in understanding not only Beza, but the entire development of Reformed theology in relation to the charge of scholasticism and rationalism. Muller demonstrated that there was no sixteenth-century theology, including Calvin's, without rational argumentation and formal categories of logic. This was as true of opposing theologies (eg.Arminianism) as it was of Reformed theology. The real difference between these systems was that the Arminian systems insisted upon an anthropomorphic causality and therefore failed to retain a Christocentric soteriology, whereas Reformed theologians, though they may have varied the order of *loci* according to their circumstances, in their soteriology they succeeded 'in remaining Christocentric precisely because it insists on a theocentric causality'.[20] Ian McPhee reached similar

conclusions in another excellent study. His work reaches only to 1570, but he found that while there was greater theological clarity, consistency and systematization in Beza's thought, it nevertheless remained faithful to the religious emphasis and insights of Calvin.[21] J.P Donnelly's work in the field of Reformed scholasticism also pointed away from Beza as its source, while still considering him as one of the 'major figures' in its development. His conclusion was that 'Martyr, Beza, and Zanchi did not bring about Reformed scholasticism. The sixteenth-century Aristotelian and scholastic tradition was responsible for its development'. These men by using it as a 'neutral instrument' in the construction of their theology, simply 'provided a sanction' for it.[22] Donnelly referred only to Beza's 'theological method and style' being affected by scholasticism, which he attributed to the influence of Martyr and Zanchi 'as well as the polemical needs of the age'.[23]

Part of the problem in this theological development arises from lack of clarity as to what is meant by the term 'Protestant scholasticism', and to whom it ought to be applied.[24] Interestingly enough, Calvin himself has not escaped the charge of being scholastic. 'Profoundly reactionary, (and) scholastic...in both method and aim', affirmed one writer.[25] Calvin used many phrases 'exactly as a Roman Catholic schoolman would use them', he went on, and obviously feeling that Calvin was a major influence in Scotland, he added, 'All the medieval morbidness that has so often corrupted Scotch piety has its legitimate roots in the essentially Roman Catholic scholasticism of Calvin'.[26] In view of this 'we may say that Calvin was one of the last, though not one of the greatest, of the schoolmen'.[27]

The Weber/Bizer/Kickel/Armstrong/Bray thesis - which has much deeper roots in the German theological schools[28] - claimed that the Protestant theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were strongly influenced by

scholastic methods and terms through the revival of Aristotelian philosophy especially in the Italian renaissance.[29] Consequently, it is said, they departed from the more biblical, humanistic orientation of the early Reformers. Several features have been suggested as characteristic of Protestant scholasticism - a deductive or syllogistic form of reasoning; Aristotelian methodology; the stress of reason and logic in religion; a speculative, metaphysical tendency concerning the will and doctrine of God; a propositional view of scriptural truth; and a lowered view of faith.[30] Assuming the validity of this criterion, it has been affirmed that 'a giant leap has been taken to move from the theological world of John Calvin to the mind-set of the Protestant scholastics...for this reason Calvin refused to distort and twist the obvious meaning of Scripture in order to harmonize it or bring it into accord with reason'.[31] And it is to Beza that the accusing finger points as the one who initially diverged from Calvin and set Reformed theology on the scholastic road in which reason became the authoratative standard and 'only permissible source of Christian truth'.[32]

Some comments can be made here in response to this general accusation. First, it is very difficult to distinguish between theologies as 'humanist' or 'scholastic' in the sixteenth century. Aristotelian thought processes persisted as a, if not the, major influence in academic life, even when challenged theologically by Luther in his *Disputatio contra scholasticam theologiam* (1520),[33] and later by the philosophy or educational utility method of Pierre de la Ramée (1515-1572),[34] or even by Calvin's own criticisms of scholastic theology.[35] Calvin may have been influenced by humanism, but, as already noted in this study, he was not adverse to using Aristotelian categories and argumentation in his theology.[36] Furthermore, Beza had as much of a humanistic background as Calvin, and indeed in his case

its influence would appear to have been more persistent in his post-conversion days as evident in his continuing interest in drama and verse and his confession that he had never been able to repent of his love of poetry.[37]

Beza employed his humanistic knowledge and gifts in order to teach and explain the Christian message. He utilized 'humanistic techniques and methodology', but these did not affect the content of his Reformed theology.[38] It has too often been assumed that methodology necessarily changed the content of Reformed theology without a careful examination being made of the content. This has certainly been the case with Beza. Muller was perfectly right in saying that the fundamental principles of Reformed theology formulated in the late sixteenth century achieved a certain independence from philosophy and method of argument, and that the development of orthodox theology and the revival of Aristotelian metaphysics were relatively independent phenomena.[39]

The Reformers, including Beza, constantly asserted the primacy of Scripture and the principle of revelation, and did not view philosophical method or rational deductive categories as primary principles.[40] They were always careful to point out the limits of reason in discussing theology, especially the doctrines of God and predestination, and this is the reason why Scripture and not predestination or the decrees tended to become the primary locus in their theological works. It is always necessary, said Muller, to distinguish between 'inevitable use of certain principles of Aristotelian philosophy as forms and structures of argument by Reformed theologians and the adoption by them of an elaborate Aristotelian metaphysic'.[41] Metaphysical subjects have always been a necessary part of theological debate, and theological integrity is not surrendered simply by the employment of some principle of Aristotelian methodology and philosophy.

One other note of caution needs to be sounded in

comparing Beza with Calvin. Beza has no theological work corresponding to Calvin's *Institutes* or expository works. Beza's time was largely occupied with controversy, defending points that were being attacked in Calvin's theology. When Beza extolled Calvin's virtues as the commentator 'founde farre to have passed and excelled all the writers, bothe old and new' and expressed his total agreement with his interpretations, he lamented the fact that the importunity of his adversaries made it necessary for him to be engaged in controversial writing rather than in teaching the Scriptures which he saw as the primary task of ministers.[42] It is therefore most inappropriate to take Beza's polemical works such as the *Summa totius Christianismi* (the *Tabula*), a product of the Bolsec affair, or the later *De Praedestinationis Doctrina*, part of the Castellio controversy, and use these as standard works of theology to compare and contrast with the *Institutes*.[43]

Beza has only three works which approach being comprehensive theological statements: the *Confession de la foi chrétienne*, which was originally written in 1556 in order to convince his father of his orthodoxy and was published in French in 1559 with the Latin edition, *Confessio fidei*, the following year becoming the definitive unrevised text.[44] The second is the *Quaestionum et Responsionum Christianorum Libellus* (2 vols. 1570,1576), which was widely used for teaching purposes.[45] The third was the *Theses Theologicae* (1586), a series of theological propositions and principles which were propounded and debated by the students in Geneva under Beza and Anthony Faye. This volume was edited by the latter, who said in the introductory epistle that Beza 'tooke the greatest paines in this worke'.[46] None of these writings could be regarded as complete theological systems and the latter two are not free from controversy. But they do demonstrate a variety of structures and show that no one order of *loci* was a *terminus ad quem* for Beza, any more than it was for

the entire Reformed tradition, and proves the wisdom of the observation that 'We cannot always argue from the position a doctrine holds in a system to the importance attached to it by those who hold the system'.[47]

In addition to this general charge of having introduced scholasticism into Reformed theology, particular areas have been singled out where Beza is said to have departed from 'his father in that which God taught' him. Briefly, these are: a shift to a more rigid presbyterial view of church government; a speculative supralapsarian view of predestination which governs his entire theology; the development of the doctrines of the imputation of Adam's sin, a limited atonement and an acceptance view of justification; a doctrine of assurance grounded in sanctification rather than faith; a 'negligible' or non-existent doctrine of the covenant; and an active resistance to tyranny. This is not the place for a detailed comparison of Beza with Calvin on each of these issues, some of which have been extensively discussed. But some general comments on the first two will suffice and others can be considered in the context of examining Beza's covenant theology.

On the matter of church government it is claimed that Beza shifted the balance in moving to a more representative or 'doctrinaire presbyterianism' form, whereas Calvin would have been more tolerant of some form of episcopacy.[48] Beza certainly concerned himself with consolidating ecclesiological development in a 'Reformed, orthodox and institutional manner, according to "the substantial" order which was revealed in Scripture'.[49] The question of divergence from Calvin hinges largely on whether or not it can be proved that Calvin was partial to an episcopalian ministerial order.[50] If there is any difference it is more one of attitude and precision of statement. Both Calvin and Beza regarded monarchical episcopacy as of non-divine origin.[51] Beza refuted it as an accidental

development, a product of human prudence; Calvin also saw it as a non-scriptural order, a human adjustment that may have been convenient in certain times and conditions in the interests of discipline and order.[52] Both roundly condemned tyrannical episcopacy which abused and secularized its office. Nor can it be held that one tolerated a 'functional episcopacy' and the other did not. Even Beza writing to Canterbury as late as March 1591, could say, 'I have always impunged the Roman hierarchy, but I have never had the intention of opposing the ecclesiastical polity of your Anglican Church'. That was, of course, so long as it maintained 'the right and title to the government of the Church with all Christian equity and moderation'.[53] The question seems to be more one of the degree of toleration in a developing situation. One thing is certain, neither showed any inclination to have episcopacy established in Geneva.[54]

Predestination

On the question of predestination, the findings of this research support entirely the argument that Beza's doctrine, though more systematized and presented with greater logical precision in response to opponents, was nevertheless true to the general structure, content, purpose and intention of that of Calvin. Scholars have been too ready to believe that 'the sum total of Christianity for Beza was completely summarized in terms of the doctrine of predestination',[55] simply on the basis of the title of the *Summa totius* (1555),[56] whereas Beza was endeavouring in this work to show the significance and importance of the doctrine in relation to other doctrines, especially the doctrine of faith, in view of the way Bolzec had confused them. The *Summa totius* has been wrongly taken as the normative presentation of, and the key to understanding, Beza's theology. In the *Confessio fidei*, the *Altera brevis fidei confessio* and in the *Catechismus*

Compendiarius predestination was not at all prominent - it was barely mentioned in them - and could in no sense be considered an organizing principle of theology.[57] The doctrine had a more important place in *Quaestionum et Responsionum*, but there the entire order tended to follow Calvin, beginning with God's intention in creation, that is, that he was to be served and worshipped according to the manner which he had declared in his word.[58] This moved directly to a statement on the Trinity, leading to consideration of the person and work of Christ. The question of salvation was introduced by reflecting on the nature of judgment and on man and his sin. This provided the backcloth for dealing with grace, faith and good works. The emphasis throughout was 'that all thinges necessarye for our salvation are founde in Christe alone', and in union with him.[59] It was only then that Beza considered providence and predestination as the wellspring of grace. He dealt with various objections to the doctrine, issuing frequent warnings against prying into God's secret will and wandering 'without our listes, that is to say not to deal by only consequences of reason'.[60] The second part of this work, published six years later, dealt mainly with the sacraments, prayer and ecclesiology.[61]

The order was different again in the *Theses Theologicae* (1586), beginning once more with the knowledge of God.[62] Then followed statements on Christ,[63] the will of God, and grace as 'the free favour of God, which is only peculiar unto the elect in Christ',[64] leading into a consideration of providence and predestination.[65] The doctrines of creation, sin, the work of Christ, faith, law, judgment and the sacraments complete the order. Kickel's contention that predestination was so prominent in Beza's theology that the other doctrines, including the Trinity, justification and the sacraments, were subordinated to it is found wanting when all the evidence is surveyed.[66]

In all these writings of Beza there was no order of

loci which would tend to place predestination alongside the doctrine of God. As in all his writings, the doctrine was permeated with a strong soteriological and pastoral emphasis. The important thing is that in none of these was predestination the organizing principle of Beza's theology. And when a look is taken beyond the title of the *Summa totius* to its content the same conclusion can be reached. At the outset Beza declared that two things were to be observed in discussing predestination. One was that 'these matters be reasoned of according to the rule of the worde of God', so that 'wee speake that which the scripture being witnesse is lawfull to speak'. Secondly, that 'what scripture declareth as touching these matters, be expounded aptlie and unto edifying'.[67]

Like Calvin, Beza distinguished between the hidden decree and the execution of the decree which was revealed because Scripture testified to both.[68] Concerning the former, Beza warned, 'Let us rather reverence that thing which is above the realm of our witte, and turne all the conceites and imaginations of our mynde to the setting foorth of his mercie'.[69] Consequently, Beza's whole exposition of the doctrine has a firm Christological orientation throughout. Right at the beginning he said that the testimony of the doctrine in Scripture 'climbeth up unto Christe himselfe, in whom notwithstanding as the head, wee are in very deede elect and adopted'.[70]

Again, like Calvin, Beza distinguished between Christ as the Son of God and as Mediator.[71] As the second person of the Trinity, Christ was inseparable from the Father and the Holy Spirit in decreeing, ordaining, creating and governing all things.[72] In the latter capacity, Christ was under the decree to bring to pass the salvation of the elect, by satisfying the law for them in every point, and through his obedience and death to do away with Adam's disobedience and sin,[73] and thus to restore them to their former estate that they might 'finde more in Christ, then

they lost in Adam'.[74] Christ, therefore, as the new Adam, was the foundation of the salvation of the elect, just as the old Adam was the foundation of the destruction of the reprobate.[75]

Beza's doctrine of limited atonement is said to be the direct result of his supralapsarianism which separated predestination from Christology. Calvin, it is claimed, gave priority to the universal promise, while Beza could not stress it otherwise he would weaken his emphasis on particularity.[76] Three things can be said in response. One is that there can be little doubt concerning the correspondence between Beza's doctrine of predestination and that of Calvin. If Beza's doctrine of predestination was the basis of his limited atonement, it is thereby a strong supportive argument for particularity in the case of Calvin. Secondly, the ambiguity, if such there is, concerning the 'universal' statements in Calvin, leaves no room for drawing dogmatic conclusions about divergence in Beza's thought at this point. Thirdly, Beza also stressed the universal offer of the promise of salvation, while affirming that it properly and peculiarly belonged to the elect. In the *Summa totius* itself, as well as elsewhere, he spoke of 'Christ universallie and indifferentlie offered to all men'.[77]

Covenantal Unity

No one appears to have given any consideration to Beza's theology of the covenant. Where referred to by one writer, it was dismissed as 'negligible, it being submerged by predestination'.[78] Only one reference was furnished from the *Confessio fidei* with the twofold comment that the covenant was mentioned by Beza only under the mediatorial work of Christ, and that 'Beza's supralapsarian construction of election eclipses the covenant'. He concluded that Beza's 'reflection on the covenant was noticeable by its absence'.[79] The reason for this neglect

seems to stem from the false assumption that Beza could have no covenantal theology because of the other false assumption that a rigid predestinarianism dominated his theology and determined his methodology. It is true that the concept of the covenant was not so intensively woven into Beza's theology as it was in Calvin's, but it surfaces significantly in practically every variety of his writings, and in a way that makes it clear that he regarded it as an integral and accepted part of Reformed tradition and theology.

Beza actually structured one of his works, the *Sermons sur le Cantique des Cantiques*, entirely on the marriage covenant idea.[79] This he regarded as the only way in which the book could be understood or its message for the church interpreted. He began by saying that the Holy Spirit pursued this motif because there is not a more sacred, 'strait or firme bond' than that of marriage. Other 'contracts and bargains' which obligate and bind men to each other are concerned with material things, or if more personal are not always reciprocal. One party may have an advantage over the other. But in marriage God himself is the 'principall author' who has declared the bond to be indissoluble, and 'the obligation or bond of both parties is so mutual and reciprocall, that neither of the parties is free at his owne choyse, and both of them become as it were one person by the coniunction of marriage'. This Beza concluded was 'the summe and scope of this Canticle', and also the sum and scope of the believer's relationship with God.[80]

This was not a manner of speaking which Beza derived solely from the Canticle. In *Quaestionum et Responsionum pars altera* and in *The Pope's Canons* he employed the idea of the covenant in the same way, referring to it as 'a covenant of comfort, hope and peace' between Christ and his spouse.[81] Christ was the spiritual bridegroom in covenantal union with his people in the church, and by the

operation of the Holy Spirit 'is so neare and so powerfully ioyned with us, by the meanes of fayth which apprehendeth him, that he quickeneth us to life eternall, working in our understanding and wil to repaire in us...the image of God'.[82]

Beza immediately launched into an exposition of the unity and continuity of this covenant from the time of Adam down to the New Testament church. Just as there were three degrees in the marriage covenant - 'the stipulation and contracting...the solemne celebration of the mariage...and lastly the consummation of the mariage' - so it is in the spiritual covenant in which Christ 'hath as it were fianced and bethrothed to himself his Church, by that promise of his made to Adam concerning the Seede of the woman'. This spiritual covenant 'he afterward reconfirmed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob'. It reached even further than the patriarchs 'when by establishing of a Leviticall priesthoode and other types and shadowes of the promises of the gospell, (*the body and substance of which was in Christ*) he did as it were espouse his love and fianced, howbeit in absence'.[83] So, Beza summed up, 'The Lorde and Saviour of the worlde hath from the beginning contracted himselfe with his Church in the person of Adam and Eve, of and from whom he would have it to be drawn and descended'.

This was the same covenant that was later made with Abraham and the patriarchs, and then in the time of Moses 'Christe himselfe did as it were represent himselfe in the ceremonial lawe, by which he approached more nearer unto his fianced, his Church, and did as it were espouse and marrie hir by words more plain and expresse, yet it was done (as saith the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews) but after an imperfect manner, and by shadows *the body and truth of which is Jesus Christ himselfe*'. And this was all done in a manner sufficient for the salvation, through Christ alone, of the ancient fathers.[84] They too belonged to the one church. They were looking for Christ, and

rejoiced to see his day, though they 'saw him not but far off in the promises and shadowes of the Lawe'.[85]

This unity of the covenant Beza emphasized again and again right to the end of the book. Kendall's claim that Beza stressed the differences between the Testaments rather than the unity finds no support here or elsewhere in Beza's works.[86] But the differences of manifestation in the covenant in the Old and New Testaments, in Beza's opinion, warranted the description of old and new covenants.

As Beza expounded these differences he was extremely careful to safeguard the unity of the covenant. For example, he said there were two covenants 'in respect of the maner and manifestation of this knowledge'. The limitations of the old covenant were ordained until the 'full exhibiting and declaration of the doctrine of salvation' at the coming of Christ. But, warned Beza, 'there was never no other mediator betweene God and man'. There has only been one bridegroom and one church, and 'in respect of his death, he hath suffered from the beginning of the world, Apoc. 13:8 and that consequently the faith of the ancient fathers and ours is al one faith, Heb.11'.[87] Again the Lord used many different ways at different times under the old covenant in order to communicate his word, (eg. through sacrifices, and the shadows and figures of the law). But, said Beza, the message communicated was 'not of another doctrine...Iesus Christ was the bodie and substance'.[88] Also in the ancient covenant Christ was more obscurely revealed, but he was nevertheless still gladly known to the fathers and provided them with sufficient light to conduct them to glory.[89]

In addition to these differences of limitation of knowledge, means of communication and degree of illumination, Beza added the 'thicke wall'. By this he meant that the old covenant was restricted largely to the Jews, whereas the new was offered to all. And here Beza distinguished, like Calvin, between that which pertained to

the covenant outwardly and generally, and the essence of the covenant, for he indicated that this limitation remained true whether we consider the outward government of Israel or 'the principal point which was the covenant of salvation'.[90] For Beza, then, the message of both covenants was the same - Jesus Christ. In the old covenant it was Jesus Christ to come, in the new it was Jesus Christ come. These were not two Christs, just as there were not two Gods, two faiths or two churches, said Beza, 'The difference therefore consisteth in the diverse dispensing and manifesting of Jesus Christ'.[91]

That this was not a convenient one-off exposition of the covenant, due to the nature of the book being dealt with, is evident from the presence of the very same teaching in his other sermons. For example, in the *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion* there are lengthy passages devoted to demonstrating the unity of substance and difference of administration in the covenants. One example will suffice: 'C'est aussi de ce mot de Iesus Christ que nous devons sommeairement recueiller la convenence et la difference qu'il y a au principal de la vieille et de la nouvelle alliance. Cest convenance donc gist en ce que l'un et l'autre sont en substance un traité d'accord et de l'appaisement de Dieu enuers son Eglise pour le salut des hommes par un seul Moyenneur nostre Seigneur Iesus, pour nous amener à vie eternelle, estans les Peres et nous, sauvés par ce mesme Savueur. Mais la difference est en ce q'il a falu que les anciens Peres se soyent contentés de la mesure de la revelation à eux faite par divers degrés et accompagnée de divers ombrages et figures des ceremonies, sous l'administration Levitique. Mais la plenitude des temps estant accomplie, le Fils de Dieu est venu visiblement et personellement en chair, pour nous declarer tresclairement et tres-pleinement tout le conseil de Dieu son Pere touchant nostre salut, Acts 20.27: Ieh. 15.15: et accomplissant en plein et entier effect tout ce

qui avoit esté promis et predit tant de la personne que de son office de Mediateur, Rom.1:2 mettre fin à tous les ombrages des ceremonies, Coloss.2:17...'[92]

Beza went on to explain that the Levitical priesthood was appointed under the ancient covenant to administer the house of God, but under the new Christ who has the personal charge of the house of his Father has offered himself as the eternal sacrifice, and the fruit of that offering is to be seen in the establishing of his church through the apostles, prophets and evangelists to whom was given an extraordinary endument of the Holy Spirit, and in the continuing ministry of pastors and doctors whom he has appointed for the order and edification of the church.

So while the substance of the covenant remained the same and the ancient fathers were also saved by Christ, the differences showed the tremendous advantage (le tresgrand avantage) which those in the New Testament church had over the ancient people of God. The latter were truly enlightened in the knowledge of Christ but it was 'en obscurité tres-espresse et tres-malheuse', whereas the former have the 'vràye et se grande lumiere de la presence du propre Fils de Dieu'.[93]

Nor was this emphasis on the unity of the covenant confined to Beza's sermon material. In the *Confessio fidei* he also affirmed that there was only ever one Mediator ordained and promised from Adam onwards and who 'was published and preached by the Patriarchs and Prophets: was also figured diverse wayes under the Lawe, as it is at large contayned in the books of the Old Testament, to the end that man might be saved by faith in Jesus Christ for to come'.[94] He continued, 'There was but one covenant of salvation betweene God and man if wee consider the substance thereof, which is Jesus Christ. But in consideration of the circumstances there are two testaments or covenants'. The old, he said, 'set forth Jesus Christ but a farre of, and hidden under shadowes and figures'.[95]

It was therefore abolished by the coming of the new, for the simple reason that Christ came 'to fulfill the covenant promised to the ancient fathers and prophesied by the mouth of the prophets'.[96]

The *New Testament Annotations* carried the same message: 'They are called two covenants, one of the Old Testament, and the other of the New: whiche were not two indeede, but in respect of the times, and the diversitie of the government'.[97] The outward things of the Old Testament had respect to the new covenant which was promised, for 'Christ shed his blood also for the Fathers: for hee was shadowed by those old ceremonies, otherwise, unless they had served to represent him, they had become nothing at all profitable. Therefore, this Testament is called the latter, not as concerning the vertue of it, (that is to say, remission of sinnes) but in respect of that time, wherein the thing it selfe was furnished, that is to say, wherein Christ was indeede exhibited to the worlde, and fulfilled all things which were necessary to our salvation'.[98]

Sacraments

The unity of the covenant was again heavily underlined in Beza's discussion of the sacraments. The sacraments, he taught, were ordained by God for the increase of faith. By this means God showed his grace and goodness to Adam and joined it to sacramental sacrifices and figures of Christ to come. 'And afterwarde in renuing this covenant of grace and mercy to Abraham, he ioyned it to the sacrament of circumcision', and then in the time of Moses to the paschal lamb.[99] These sacraments of 'the ancient aliance or covenaunt were ordayned, but untill the coming of Jesus Christ', and then replaced by those of the new, which have the same end, to direct the faithful to Christ. There may be a difference in the signs and ceremonies and in the number, but they were all directed to

one end.[100]

Beza used the idea of the covenant repeatedly in this respect during the eucharistic controversy. In one treatise in response to Claude de Sainctes, he devoted practically the entire eighth chapter to an exposition of the covenant.[101] Incidently, in these passages it is to be noted how Beza also used the terms *foedus*, *pactum* and *testamentum* interchangeably.

The same pattern was followed in discussing the sacraments in part two of the *Quaestionum et Responsionum*. Here he referred to the significance of the rainbow as a sign of the covenant with Noah, which in turn pointed to baptism as a sign of the covenant. In other words God implanted signs and seals of the covenant in nature as well as in the specifically given sacraments in the Old Testament economy.[102] In his preaching, Beza commented on the significance of the changed signs, but stressed that all covenantal signs pointed to Christ. Under the ancient covenant, the Lord represented Christ and the life received from him by more corporeal signs, that is, by sacrifices and oblations of creatures. In the new covenant, water, bread and wine were the 'sacramentall signes of that which himselfe doth in us'.[103] The water signified the spiritual washing away of sins, and the bread and wine showed from whom eternal life was drawn.[104]

The same thing was taught to the students in the Geneva Academy: 'See what agreement and what difference there was, between the sacraments of both the covenaunts, that by this means it may be declared that the same faith was under both of them...the covenaunt of God with his church was alwaies one and the same'.[105] They may have seemed different in various ways, he went on, but while the signs were changed 'the thinges remained the same in regard of the substance', because both covenants have one Author, and Christ and participation in all of his benefits is the end and scope of both.[106] The differences were only in

the manner or measure of signifying or applying Christ, and in outward forms, matter and numbers. Beza listed three of these: The old showed Christ to come; the new showed Christ come with new signs. The old was for an appointed time; the new to the end of the world. The old had more signs than the new, which had only two, but as Augustine said, they were clearer and had more significance therefore they were of greater efficacy in confirming faith and sealing the promises of the covenant in the heart.[107]

Beza continued the Reformed tradition of discussing baptism in terms of the covenant, especially with respect to its subjects: 'All those are to be baptized, who in regard of liklihood are contained within the covenant'. So infants of believing parents were 'to be accounted within the covenant'.[108] Like Calvin, Beza said that those of full age were to be instructed and confess true faith before baptism, but 'touching infants, seeing our adoption doth not depend upon our selves, or upon any outward thing, but only upon the election of God...by vertue of that covenant (I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed) although infants be not indued with actuall faith, which is by hearing: yet doe wee at this day, justlie baptize, (as in times past they were circumcised) the infants of the saints, because they are comprehended with in the covenaunt of eternall life, by means of the faith of their parents'. This statement is remarkable for the way in which it links together adoption,election and the covenant, a pattern which was found to be typical of Calvin.[109]

Beza encountered the same problem as Calvin with respect to his view of baptism and covenant and the doctrine of election and the rejection of Israel. What about children of the faithful who were not included in the covenant? How did these relate to the fact that 'he comprehendeth in his free covenant...not only the faithful, but also their posteritie unto a thousand generations'?[110]

Beza's response was that while all children of believers were to be 'reckoned in' or 'thought to belong to' the covenant, that did not mean that they were *ipso facto* in the elect.[111] Who the elect were was to be left to the secret judgment of God, so all such children were to be presumed to be in the covenant until 'it is playne that they are shutte out from the covenant', when they come to years of discretion and are seen to shake off that same grace through unbelief, rather than have their 'engraffement into the covenant' ratified.[112]

Receiving the seal or sign of the covenant was no guarantee of salvation, since 'the beginning of salvation is not derived from Baptisme', but from 'the tables of the covenant it self'.[113] This did not mean that baptism was to be contemned or despised. Contempt for 'the marke of the covenant', would reveal 'a man unworthie of the benefite of the covenant'.[114] The Jews had been cut off because they had made void the covenant of the Lord.[115] Then there were the classic examples of Cain, Ishmael and Esau. These were sons of the faithful, but 'doe nothing at all belong unto the covenant'. This was manifest when they grew up to depart from it.[116]

Beza used an interesting differentiating phrase in this connection. There may be those like Esau who did not really belong to the covenant, yet Beza appealed on the basis of 'the indefinite form of the covenant' at this level to hope well of all those born of the faithful.[117] Here was an indication of the same kind of distinction in his thinking between a general covenant with Israel and the covenant proper with the elect which was evident in Calvin's theology. The casting off of Israel or the unfaithfulness of some of the children of the faithful did not 'make the covenant which God made with Abraham and his seede frustrate and voyde'. There was a general election of Israel and a secret choice by God of those from within Israel. The grace of salvation was 'offered generallie'

to all, but 'the efficacie thereof pertained onely to the elect'.[118]

The same situation prevailed in the church since Christ's coming. Times of unfaithfulness to the covenant had often called for a return to God.[119] In 'the time of the new covenant' the chief examples of unfaithfulness to the covenant were the Pharisees and scribes of Jesus' day and the false watchmen of the Roman church. These attributed to themselves power to dispense with God's law and to invent new doctrines.[120] Nor was the Reformed church free from hypocrites and unfaithful folk.[121] But just as all Israel was not to be judged reprobate by the unbelief of some. 'Because God is faithful in his league and covenant although men be unfaithful', so 'wee hope well of every member in the church'.[122] Sometimes the church has been brought to a very low state when it has been even more difficult to distinguish the elect, yet God did not cast off his chosen people. The important thing then was to remember 'the roote of the covenaunt', that is, the promise of God to bless the seed of the faithful, and since the ancestors were faithful 'wee know that the blessing of the covenant resteth in some of their posteritie'.[123] And this was due entirely to the grace of God, and not because of 'any holinesse of nature, but because they were borne of them whom the Lord set apart for himselfe...by his league and covenant, which he freely made with them'.

So in spite of many refusing God's gift, Beza insisted that the promise would still be fulfilled 'because the covenant of life everlasting cannot be frustrate or vaine'.[124] In *Psalmorum Davidis paraphrasis*, Beza made the same affirmation with reference to the covenant made with David. God's faithfulness to the covenant could not be altered though it was violated by the posterity of David.[125] True Christians, that is, those in the covenant proper would, in times of declension and disappointment with the watchmen as in Old Testament days, eventually be

prompted by the covenantal promises to seek Christ and bewail the disorder in the church and be reconciled with their covenanted Bridegroom.[126] Zacharias, Elizabeth, Mary, Simeon, Anna and John the Baptist were examples of those who 'retained the substance of the covenant' (*retenans le fondement de l'alliance*) in a time of declension prior to the coming of Christ.[127]

Beza consequently followed Calvin's view of a double calling, one inward and efficacious, the other outward with 'no value unto salvation', due entirely to the deafness of men. Among those outwardly called and in membership of the church would be many hypocrites and reprobates, but the name 'church', Beza insisted, properly belonged to 'the assemblie of the elect and predestinate of God'.[128] Hypocrites had the benefit of the outward ministry of the church - the sacraments, the word of God preached, the invitation to the gospel feast - but they failed to respond to the word and embrace the truth in saving faith.[129]

Hypocrites, Beza said, could manifest a 'generall fayth' and give the appearance of being true members, attempting even to 'shewe unto others the waye of salvation', but wanting the spirit of adoption within they eventually become hardened and do not perservere.[130] So while 'there be two maner of men touching the Churche...the true Churche be invisible' in respect of the elect known to Christ.[131] It was foolish therefore to rest in what was only visible. Even in the Reformed church, complained Beza, there were 'those who are reformed in name, but more then deformed in deede, who have put off the Pope with his superstition, but yet have not put on Iesus Christ and true godlines'. They had not yet hearkened to what the Bridegroom said by 'all the ancient prophecies and shadowes of the Lawe...*Come unto Me*'.[132]

Law and Gospel

The unity of the covenant continued as a prominent

feature of Beza's teaching on the law in relation to the gospel. The law he defined as 'the doctrine which teacheth us what we ought to do' towards God and each other.[133] This he summarized as 'to conforme our whole life to the wil of God, the rule of all righteousness'.[134] The gospel was that doctrine that teaches us 'what we must beleeve to our salvation throuw Iesus Christ onely'.[135] But again, reminiscent of Calvin, Beza saw the law becoming gospel in Christ: 'All the promises of the Lawe, in Christ who for us fulfilled that sure condition of the Lawe, are become promises of the Gospell'.[136] This was so because both had the same origin and substance. Both came from one God, 'who remaineth continually like unto himself, so that we may not think that the one abolisheth the other'. And the substance of both was the unchanging righteousness of God.[137]

One difference, however, between law and gospel was that the law was originally natural in man. 'God printed and engraved it from creation in his heart'. Adam was created under that same law, it was 'naturallie engraffed in him', and the precepts revealed after the fall to the patriarchs and prophets did not constitute a new law; they were designed to revive the natural law which was being quenched by sin. The cause of death was always the breach of the law.[138] The gospel on the other hand was supernatural, declaring the same righteousness, majesty, and justice of God, but in a manner 'so as it is appeased and satisfied through mercy'.[139]

Because of man's corrupt nature, Beza saw the requirements of 'these two covenaunts, that is to say, to doe that which the law commaundeth, or believe that which God offereth in Jesus Christ', as not only most difficult but 'utterly impossible' to man. The gospel, however, brought not only a declaration of righteousness and salvation, but the virtue and regenerating power of the Holy Spirit to effect it through faith.[140] Because both

law and gospel declared the same righteousness, it followed that the preaching of the law served the gospel, by showing men what they should be and thus prepared them for the gospel.[141]

'Christ,' said Beza, 'came not to bring any new way of righteousness and salvation into the world', but to fulfil that which was shadowed by the law and deliver men from the curse of the law through grace, 'and moreover to teach them the use of obedience'.[142] Christ was the true expounder of the law, who cleared it of the false accretions or 'glosses of the scribes', who had meddled with the law and not been true to it.[143] In a similar fashion Rome had done likewise, charged Beza, and consequently had not only falsified the law, but also 'the covenant of salvation in Iesus Christ alone', which was known to the apostles and fathers. By eclipsing some of his laws and adding to and clipping others they had denied Christ in all of his offices and turned white to black and light to darkness.[144]

It was important to distinguish between those who made laws and those who published them. Christ was the original giver of the law; Moses and the angels were only messengers to report the commandments given.[145] Commenting on the Abrahamic covenant, Beza insisted that the covenant of the law had never been given to justify. All men, both Jews and Gentiles, in all ages were to be justified through the same covenant as that made with Abraham. The law could not alter that covenant. Just as 'covenants and contracts' among men were binding, so God's covenant was more 'firme and strong than any authentic earthly covenant'. Men may 'sometimes by consent of the parties, which have made such a covenant', add to it or break former covenants, but this could never be true of God. Therefore, 'the promise was not abrogated by the covenant of the law', nor was it intended to be. It was actually reinforced by it.[146]

The law then when viewed in its totality was not contrary to the gospel. It was only when viewed as a bare commandment or looked to as a covenant of life by fallen men that it was set against the gospel. Those who would oppose the promises of salvation to the observance of the law do so only 'because they presuppose perfect accomplishment and fulfilling of the law, which is not found, nor shal be found, save in Iesus Christ alone'.[147] When discussing good works in *Quaestionum et Responsionum*, the interrogator interjected: 'But although the hyre of eternall life be not dew for the worthines of the very workes; yet is it dew at leastwyse by covenaunt?'

'What covenant meene you I beseeche you?' asked Beza.

'The covenant of the lawe, which is *Do this and thou shalt live*': and *If thou wilt enter into life kepe the crmmaundments*' [sic]. Beza replied that the covenant thus viewed was to be seen by the threatening over against the promise. The law required perfect obedience and those who failed were placed under its curse. Therefore, life could be due to none by this covenant, but could only come through the 'meere grace' of Christ.[148]

This was the case right from the time of Adam. Even before the time of the law, 'there was the treatie of these fiansailes', that is of the marriage covenant between Christ and the church. The time of the law set forth the Bridegroom in the types and shadows of sacrifices, the temple and the priesthood; and then at Christ's coming 'the contract of the new covenant' was established in its present words and ratified by the new seal of the Lord's supper. The law properly understood was but one of the degrees in the unfolding of the spiritual covenant in Christ: 'This hath bin alwaies the right maner of speaking of the figures and shadowes of the Lawe ceremoniall, that the people was alwaies ledde unto the substance and bodie of them, which is our Lorde Iesus Christ'.[149] This meant that the purpose of the ministry

had never changed with respect to the salvation of men. It had always been to lay open God's goodness 'in the free covenant made in Christ onelie: who both before and under the rudiments of the law was shadowed, and manifested in deed in the fulnesse of time'.[150]

Beza, then, regarded the fall of man and the ensuing death visited upon mankind as the consequence of the violation of the one law of righteousness. This was the case with Adam as well as with his posterity. Adam had been created holy, 'and hee had also become righteous if he had kept the lawe which his creator had appoynted him'.[151] It was not surprising, therefore, that Beza viewed the reconciling work of Christ as essentially a law work as well as a manifestation of the God's love. Christ was under the law in all his offices in order to provide full satisfaction for the very least transgression of God's law. 'It behoved the Mediator of this covenaunt and reconciliation to be very man...to accomplishe all righteousnesse to please God'.[152] But he also had to be very God 'to have satisfaction that is infinite', that is, that he might 'succeede and surmount the trespasse', in order to undo the disobedience of the 'first Adam the author of our offence'.[153] Through the work of the second Adam, believers could hope for a life so much better than that which was lost in the first Adam, as much as Jesus Christ was above Adam.[154]

Christ 'fulfilled perfectly all righteousnesse, for to cover our unrighteousnesse', and he has made 'the whole and full satisfaction for our sinnes', said Beza. He has paid fully the debt owed to a broken law.[155] This is what was involved in fulfilling 'the covenant promised to the ancient fathers and prophesied by the mouth of the prophets'.[156] The fulfilling of righteousness by Christ was described as his obedience to the law, by being subject to it and by bearing the punishment due for the breach of it.[157] And this righteousness which was Christ's own

became the believer's by imputation, in which the Father 'vouchsafeth to account Christ's obedience as ours, in as amplewise as if we ourselves had fulfilled the law, and made satisfaction for our sinnes'.[158]

Christ then was accounted a law-breaker, not in himself, but in those for whom he died, while they were reckoned as righteous, not in themselves, but in him. Salvation could only be through the satisfaction of the requirements of the law: 'Of that righteousnesse whereby a man is accounted righteous before God, the certaine squeere and invariable rule is God's owne law'. The law had threatened death as the penalty for its violation, as well as insisting on perfect love to God and neighbour. Only Christ could meet those requirements for he 'not onely never sinned, but also performed the whole lawe to the full'.[159]

It was this righteousness or satisfaction of the demands of the law which was imputed for justification and enabled the sinner to be accepted by God. And in this context, Beza again underlined that this required righteousness of the law went beyond the verbal giving of the law. It reached back to creation itself in a natural obligation. He did this when he raised the question of Christ by becoming man being 'bound by nature to perform the righteousnesse of the law...because the said law is laid upon the nature of mankind'. So while Christ was keeping the law for man, he was also keeping it for himself as far as his human nature was concerned, although in keeping it for man he was also satisfying the violation of it, something which did not apply in his own case.[160] But it must be remembered that Christ was 'bound by the performance of the lawe, not properly by nature, but by good will'. The purpose of his coming was not on his own behalf, but on behalf of his own people, to fulfil the law for them and to die for them.[161]

It was in his offices as the Mediator of the new

covenant that Christ fulfilled all the requirements of the *foedus legale*. He paid the penalty for 'all sinnes, none excepted', of all his people. He was able to do this because there was no defilement figured by the law to be found in him. There was nothing that would sharpen God's anger against him or require appeasement. 'There was none then but one alone Iesus Christ man, to whom this right of eternall life, according to the covenant of the law, doth properlie appertaine'.[162] Therefore since Christ 'accomplished the whole law in al perfection', it followed 'according unto the covenant of the law promising life eternall unto him which shal entirely observe it', that Christ had merited that life. He did not need to do so on his own behalf, but he merited it for his people that they might avoid death and obtain life, since they could not be accepted by God on any merit of their own or by any attempt at satisfying the *foedus legale* for themselves.[163] Beza rejoiced that 'That fearful hatred of God against every trangression of the law, which could in no wise bee appeased but by a most perfect satisfaction', had been turned away in the death of Christ so that 'we are clad with such a righteousness as the law of God requireth'.[164]

But Beza's view of the law of God and the work of Christ was far from being 'legalistic'. For him the righteousness of the law separated from the rule of the Spirit produced a purely 'literall and outward obedience'. What was required was a spiritual obedience, so Paul, he said was not playing the Sophist by urging Christians to walk in the Spirit. By doing so he was urging nothing but what the law commanded. The Spirit of Christ was 'the true ruler and guider of life'.[165] Even the *Summa totius*, the work usually referred to by those who wish to describe Beza's theology as purely speculative and scholastic, has a very warm pastoral stress, and it is important to note in it the significance of the doctrine of the Spirit. For Beza, faith, the work of the Spirit, and election were

inseparable.[166] And the place at which the work accomplished by Christ began to be applied was one of the major emphases in Beza's writings, namely the union of the believer with Christ, or his 'ingraffing into Christ'.[167] This, too, was interpreted in terms of the covenant. Where the work of Christ represented the fulfilling of the covenant promised, union with Christ represented the covenant coming to fruition in the life of the believer.

The eternal decree of God was not only to give the Son of God to believers, but also to give them to the Son, that is, to unite them to Christ.[168] The Spirit accomplished this work through effectual calling by means of the preaching of righteousness causing men to fly to the Mediator.[169] Beza was quite insistent that union with Christ could only be conceived of as covenantal union. In *Quaestionum et Responsionum* he addressed himself to the question as to what was meant by union with Christ or by ingraffing into, being incorporated into and communicating Christ. In reply, he said that it could not be a union of substances, therefore it was a spiritual union in which Christ was given to his people by the benefit of the Father.[170] This statement indicates that Beza conceived of this union as not just coming into existence through the spiritual regeneration of the Spirit. It was something that reached back into the eternal correspondence between the Father and the Son. Beza did not use the term 'covenant of redemption' but it is significant that he did introduce a pre-temporal dimension in discussing the nature of covenantal union.

His reply went on to say that while this union was not a bodily one, yet in such a spiritual and mystical union, Christ was so 'fast and strait knit unto us that we be fleshe of his flesh and bone of his bone' (Eph.5:30).[171] Christ was communicated to the believer in his whole manhood, so that the believer became 'one thing with Christ'. This union was effected in the believer when the

Holy Spirit in his regenerating work linked together what was in distance so far apart. In this union Christ was the head and the church was the body drawing spiritual life and 'all thinges needful for salvation' from him.[172]

Union with Christ, Beza declared, was something which involved a great mystery and was ultimately beyond the reach of human comprehension. 'We should rather labour to feele Chryst living in us: than be made made privye to the reason of this communion: as which surmounteth our capacitie'.[173] Men could, however, understand something of this union from the analogy of human wedlock in which two persons become one flesh yet remain 'eche one flesh'. There was only one way to describe this union, Beza concluded, 'Therefore this cupplinge into one fleshe, is not of nature, but of covenaunt: and so also is our communion with Christe into one Spirite'.[174]

The *Sermons sur le Cantique* were, as already mentioned, basically an exposition of covenantal union. There, Beza interpreted the entire Christian life in terms of the union of Christ and his church, but he also extended it to the future state as well. This union or 'spirituall contract' had two degrees, he said. The first was to be known in this present life, when the promise of the Bridegroom was received by the faith of the spouse through the instrumentality of the preaching of the gospel, and sealed by baptism and the Lord's supper.[175] This covenantal bond was the means by which all the benefits and blessings of salvation in this life were to be obtained.[176]

The second degree of the covenantal union was 'the real and entire actual union, whereunto we shal come in the later day'.[177] Just as 'the auncient church having the gages and pledges of this spiritual marriage' were enabled to partake of the blessings of the Bridegroom before his first appearing, and were constantly 'beseeching him to approach yet nearer unto her, and in person, causing the shadowes and figures of the ancient covenant to vanish

awaie and depart', so those who 'are fallen unto this happie time' in which the Bridegroom has been manifest in the flesh causing the light of salvation to be more clearly revealed, ought 'more fervently and earnestly' to be seeking and praying for the final consummation of this marriage at his coming again.[178]

Mutuality and Conditionality

Beza remained true to the Reformers' stress on the priority of grace in the establishing of the covenant. God himself was the 'principall author' in the contract of marriage.[179] But Beza's presentation of the doctrine of the covenant was by no means one-sided and entirely unilateral. Like Calvin, he frequently referred to the mutuality of the covenant with its 'reciprocall' (a favourite word) obligations, and the conditionality of the promises of the covenant.

It was not only because of the 'strait or firm bond' that was to be found in the marriage covenant that the Holy Spirit pursued this analogy in describing the union of Christ and believers, it was also because of the reciprocal nature of the obligation. 'Agayne, the obligation or bond of both parties is so mutual and reciprocall, that neither of the parties is free at his owne choyse, and both of them become as it were one person by the coniunction of mariage'.[180] Here is a close parallel to Calvin's view of the covenant in terms of the self-binding of God, as well as the binding of the believer to God.

Beza added that this mutuality served to comfort those in covenant: 'To the end we should be the more certaine and assured, it not onelie saide *that this beloved is ours*, but also *that we the beloved* are his. The donation therefore is mutual and reciprocall'.[181] This mutuality was also reflected in the two-fold purpose of the sacrament, which was 'to seale and ratifie in us the salvation which we do not possesse as yet but by fayth and

hope', and secondly, 'to stirre and quicken us on our part, as well concerning our duties towardes his maiestie, as to our neighbours, according to the tenour of the covenaunt'.[182]

Faith was the 'excellent instrument' by which the covenantal 'ingraffing' into Christ was effected, and the fruits of this union were communion with Christ and the conforming of the life of the believer to Christ's righteousness in good works.[183] Both faith and good works, Beza viewed in terms of covenantal conditions. These need to be considered more fully.

Beza set forth the conditional nature of faith in various writings. Faith had a two-fold nature. In the first place it involved giving assent to the history of Christ. But this alone did not constitute saving faith since some of the reprobates did this and even the devils made that kind of acknowledgement of the truth. Full saving faith was the proper and peculiar possession of the elect, and it 'standeth in this, that wee applie unto our selves as our owne, Christe universallie and indifferentlie offered to all men'. This was what it meant to believe in Christ or to 'take hold' of him or embrace him.[184] In the *Summa totius* Beza depicted God setting before his people the 'grace and gentlenes of the gospell: yet adding this condition: if they believe in Christ, who alone can deliver them, and give the power and right to obtaine the heavenly inheritance'.[185] In the *Confessio fidei*, he said, 'Faith embraceth and appropriateth to it selfe Iesus Christ, and all that is in him for as much as he is given to us on that condition that we believe in him'.[186]

In the *Altera brevis fidei confessio*, Beza repeated the same thing: 'Jesus Christ is declared to us in his word under this condition, that we doe take of him, and apply him to our selves by faith.... When any man beleeveth...he is made a partaker of all the benefits of Jesus Christe to eternall life: for Jesus Christ is offered

to us upon this condition'. Having discussed the perfect righteousness provided for sinners through the Mediator, Beza added, 'But yet neverthelesse we must ioyne a condition to this, that is to saye, if we doe take or ioyne to us these remedies in Jesus Christ. For as it profiteth not a sicke person to have a good medicine except he use it, nor a hungrye man to be at a tables end garnished with plenty of good meats, except he eat of them: likewise be the remedies of Jesus Christ against the wrath of God and eternall death set before us in vaine, except we use them'.[187] In the *New Testament Annotations* Beza put the matter even more succinctly in comparing those who wanted to be under the law as a covenant of life with the gospel of salvation by faith in Christ: 'The doctrine of works hath his condition ioyned with it. If thou dost: and the doctrine of faith hath this condition. If thou believest'.[188] It would be difficult to come much closer to the term and meaning of the 'covenant of works' than Beza did in this passage.

Faith then was an active thing as far as salvation was concerned: 'Eche man must apply the promis of eternall life in Christ peculiarly to himself by beleeving'.[189] And in the case of parents the conditions of the covenant were applicable not only in relation to themselves, but also to their children. Leaving the question of whether or not the children are elect in the secret judgment of God, Beza went on, 'wee doubt not, but that the faithful Parents, doe according unto the conditions of the covenant, apprehend the promise both to themselves, and also to their children'.[190] In this context he also spoke of the responsibility to catechize and instruct children in their duties and obligations as they come to the years of discretion.[191]

These quotations above, taken by themselves, would tend to give the impression that for Beza faith was purely bilateral, something that belonged to man by nature and

which he must exercise for salvation. But this would only be to distort Beza's doctrine of faith. All these references were accompanied by strong affirmations that the saving faith of the elect was not their own, nor could they exercise it apart from the enabling grace of the Holy Spirit. In the *Summa totius* he said that the setting forth of the gospel and the condition of believing would be in vain unless 'hee ioyneth this inward power of the holie spirite', not simply to repair or renew the remnants of free will in man, but to turn, draw and enlighten the elect.[192] The Holy Spirit caused men to feel their sinful calamity and misery, but it was also he who created faith in them, 'that they may be able to performe the condition annexed or knit unto the preaching of the Gospell'.[193]

Faith, Beza never tired of repeating, was the gift of God's 'meere and free grace', not something men have by nature, but something ingrafted into the elect by God himself.[194] Man by nature could have some insights into the history of Christ, but if faith was not gifted by God then the revelation of God would just never be thought of.[195]

In the *Confessio fidei* faith was described as that 'which the Holy Ghost by his onely grace and goodnesse, engraveth more and more in the heartes of the elected of God, by whiche eche one doth apply and appropriate to his selfe the promise of his salvation in Jesus Christ'.[196] In this work there was a tremendous emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit who brings all the graces necessary for salvation.[197] 'The same holy spirite makes us capable and meet to receive the same Jesus Christ, the which he doth in creating within us by his meere divine goodness and mercye, that which we call fayth, the onely instrument to take holde of Jesus Christe, when he is offered to us and the onelye vessel to receive him'.[198] This gift of faith was created by the Spirit ordinarily through the word and sacraments. It had to be God's work, because it was 'most

necessarye, that oure salvation should remaine in surer hands than our owne'.[199]

After illustrating the condition of salvation with the picture of the sick person using the remedy, Beza went on in the *Altera brevis fidei confessio* to enlarge on how that could be done and Christ applied to profit and advantage. He said that the dispairing sick person needed to be disposed to using the medicine and only the physican could dispose him to do this. The same physican who provides the remedy 'doe prepare and make us apt and meete, that wee both will and can use those remedies, which hee prepareth and appoynteth to us'.[200] The remedy, Beza continued, was applied by a double effect and working of the Holy Spirit. First, he disposes the intelligence to understand the doctrine of the gospel, which otherwise would appear foolish. He then makes the spirit believe that it is not only true but 'also that it appertaineth to us: and this is that is called fayth'.[201]

So Beza, together with the Geneva academy, affirmed 'this faith to be the meere gift of God, peculiar only to the elect...this faith doth God creat, at what time, and in what measure it pleaseth him, strengthening and increasing the same, by little and little, though never perfecting it while we are heare: yet graunting so much of it in this life as is needful for the elect to obtaine the victorie'.[202]

From the foregoing, the twofold stress in Beza's presentation of the covenant is clearly evident. There were both bilateral and unilateral elements to it. He left the resolution of the apparent tension between them in the distinction between the eternal decree and its execution. A condition annexed to the ordinance, he explained, did not mean that the ordinance depended on the condition.[203] This was simply another way of saying that such conditions were consequent conditions and not antecedent. He pointed out that the ordinance of saving was not the saving. 'The

ordinance must needs be distinguished from the execution of it'. It was the execution of the ordinance of election that depended on the faith that takes hold of Christ. And the ordinance of election was the cause of faith.[204] This meant that the cause of salvation from beginning to end was 'the onely meere grace and favour of God who has elected and called to salvation'. But God also ordained and appointed the causes by which he executed his eternal counsel regarding election and salvation. This alone explained why 'that faith created in us by grace, apprehendeth and taketh holde of Iesus Christ, and of life in him'.[205]

Faith for Beza was central to the issue of assurance. The elect, he maintained, passed from death to life the moment they had faith; therefore it was a 'sure pledge they have that their life is hidden in Christ'.[206] Faith believed in Christ dead and risen, and embraced him 'in whom onelye she trusteth and so assureth her selfe of her salvation that she doubteth not'.[207] Beza's basis for saying this was that all that was necessary for salvation was in Christ, and it would by 'as blasphemy most execrable' to say otherwise. Therefore, by embracing or taking hold of Christ 'it appeareth that to be assured of salvation by fayth, is not any arrogancy or presumption: but on the contrary part, it is the only meanes to take all pryde from ourselves, for to give all glory to God'.[208]

Because Christ himself was the basis of assurance neither Satan himself nor the believer's sins, his want of righteousness, shortcomings before the law, or natural corruptions should ultimately affright him. 'Why? He who is the life, and he that hath overcome death for us by his owne death is ours. What thing then is able to trouble our repose, or abate our assurance?'[209] This faith Beza went on to identify with the *testimonium sancti Spiritus*: 'Faythe which is the testimonie of the Spirite of God, testifying in our heartes, assureth us, that the

malediction and curse of the law is wyped out, by the blood of Jesus Christ, with whom we be united and knyt'.[210] In distinguishing, as he often did, between faith which is mere mental assent to the truths of Scripture, and the saving faith which takes hold of, or applies, Christ with all his benefits, Beza said that this 'faith whereof we now speake, we doe define to be that assurance whereby, beyond the former assent, the godlie are carried into Christ'.[211]

In the *Confessio fidei*, Beza was just as explicit in his definition, if not more so: 'Fayth is no other thing but an assurance which wee have that the promises of eternall life appertaineth unto us...if one lyttle spark of faith, and so following one lyttle motion of the working of it, bee in us it is sufficient to assure us of our salvation'.[212] But in thus defining faith as assurance, Beza was not thereby saying that there was no room at any time in the Christian life for doubt. Faith was never perfect in this life. There were degrees in the creation of the gift of faith in the elect.[213] Faith was only begun when men first laid hold on Christ for salvation. Perserverance in faith and in partaking of Christ were needed. Times of temptation or weakness could come when faith may be buried or stray out of the way for a time and even seem to be wholly extinguished.[214] Again the believer may be assailed by satanic doubts as to his eternal election.[215]

It was in such situations as these that Beza's full-orbed doctrine of assurance was spelt out. As a good pastor, he kept all the biblical issues in assurance tightly together. It is quite wrong in assessing Reformed theology to attempt to separate saving faith from the testimony of the Spirit (spirit of adoption), the word of God and the works of the believer with respect to the question of assurance.[216] To do so is to distort their theology of assurance. Covenantal union with Christ produced 'a most full and lively affection of a most

assured faith'. But that faith was never alone, and all that accompanied it or flowed from it had an assuring influence as well. For example, the Spirit of God brought forth the fruit of repentance, and this in turn brought 'a true assurance of conscience thoroughly pacified and quieted, then when of the grace and favour of God apprehended by true and lively faith, we are resolved of the love of God, by the testimony and witnes of his spirit of adoption, teaching us what God has determined of us'.[217] And to this inward testimony of the Spirit and fruit of repentance, Beza joined the external preaching of the word in relation to assurance.[218]

It was in addressing the question of doubt that Beza brought all these factors into play. By so doing he did not imply that assurance was based in works or preaching. He stressed that assurance was not rooted in anything in us but in faith which fully and perfectly apprehendeth Christ.[219] But it did mean that 'These are effects by which fayth, the very cause of them' was manifest; therefore in times of affliction and doubt 'wee maye gather faith' (ie. strengthen faith) by a consideration of its effects.[220] In this way the believer did not ground himself in good works either in part or whole, but they did help to 'assure more and more of our salvation, not as causes therof, but as testimonies and effects of the cause, to wit, of our fayth'.[221]

Consequently in strengthening faith good works also assisted to 'assure us of our eternall election, for fayth is necessarily ioyned to election'.[222] Beza claimed that no matter how low he was brought by temptation and doubt, the true Christian was never so far away that the love of God and neighbour was wholly out of his mind, since he had been created in Christ Jesus unto good works.[223] In times of doubt regarding election it was useless to 'rest in coniectures' of the human brain, or to try to penetrate to the secret counsel of God. The important thing was to

hear the voice of God calling to faith in Christ the only Mediator. Beza, therefore, exhorted that attention should be given to the plain truth of God's word and that a consideration of the effects of faith was where to begin, that is, 'whether thou bee iustified and sanctified...by faith in Christ', because sanctification 'is a certain effect of faith, or rather of Jesus Christ dwelling in us by faith'.[224]

Nowhere did Beza divorce faith from works or make works rather than faith the basis of assurance. Always he pointed to Christ and to the faith which unites him to his people. Faith as the root of assurance was ordinarily sufficient for the comfort of the believer, but the testimony of the effects of faith could help in times of affliction, temptation and doubt. But even then it was faith in Christ which was the answer, since it was union with Christ by faith which 'bringeth foorth his effects and woorkes being naturallye united to the bodye'.[225]

It followed, because of the inseparability of faith and good works, or of justification and sanctification, which was as pronounced in Beza's thinking as it was in Calvin's,[226] that if faith was regardeded as a covenantal condition, good works should be likewise. In view of the centrality of faith and the place of works relative to faith (ie. the fruit of faith) in Beza's theology, it is difficult to understand the accusations of 'legalism' and 'brutal' insistence on good works made against him in this respect.[227] Beza continually insisted that there was no worthinesse of merite or desert' whatsoever to be attached to the works of the saints or anyone else.[228] Saving merit could only be found in Christ. Any suggestion of the fulfilment of the whole law as well being necessary for salvation had its origin in Satan. Only Christ ever has or ever could do that, and the benefits of his satisfaction of the law belonged to the believer. Not only his justification but his restoration and sanctification were

all in Christ and 'imputed to us as our owne'.[229]

But the believer not only had the righteousness of Christ imputed to him for justification and sanctification; the regenerating work of the Spirit was begun within him to make him a new creature. This was manifested in three ways: in the mortification of natural corruption, the burying of the old man, and the resurrection of the new man which was evidenced 'by continuall exercising of good workes' and prayer.[230] Sanctification, like justification, was wholly of the grace of God and proceeded from Christ. 'Ingraffing' into Christ, Beza maintained, could never be separated from death to sin and a life of righteousness. 'Sanctification is so ioyned and knit to our graffing in Christ that it can by no means be separated'. Therefore, any man who was continuing to live in sin and showed so sign of repentance was not only not sanctifed, he had never been made a partaker of Christ by faith. The one was a testimony of the other.[231]

Sanctification like justification was by imputation, but unlike justification, it was not by imputation only; it was also a righteousness which was 'graffed in and stickes in us' by the grace of God, and manifested itself in good works.[232] But imputed sanctification was always needed in order to be continually acceptable to God. Because of continual shortcomings, no one could attain to full sanctification in this life.[233]

The rule of life for the Christian was still the moral law of God. Beza adopted the traditional three-fold distinction between the moral, ceremonial and judicial law, the moral law being permanent as an expression of the will of God, while the ceremonial law was fulfilled and abrogated in Christ.[234] In his *Lex Dei, Moralis, Ceremonialis, et Civilis* (1577), he followed Calvin's *tertius usus legis* of the moral law. The third use was to be a rule of life for our sanctification through the Spirit of the gospel (*et ipsa per Spiritum Evangelii*

sanctificatis, iter bonae rectaeque viæ praemonstret).[235] Concerning the law, Beza said there were two points 'most notable and cleare and certaine, namely, that the lawe moral, which is nothing but a refreshing and renewing of the lawe natural, which sinne could not utterly destroy out of the heart of man, Rom.2.14 and likewise the new covenant ratified in and by our Lorde Iesus Christ, ought to be kept inviolable unto the end and consummation of the world'. Christ, he said, was king over these and had never appointed any lieutenant to abolish them.[236]

The will of God was the 'most certain rule' for the believer in following a life of good works, and there could be no better witness of the will of God than his holy law, as outlined in the decalogue.[237] This function of the law in the believer's life, Beza described as 'Another fruite of the preaching of the lawe, after the preaching of the Gospell beginneth to worke'.[238] The law remained unchanged, but the new disposition wrought by the Spirit within the believer made it now a comfort where it was once feared. It could no longer condemn and curse, but 'serveth us now for a guide to shewe us the goode workes into which we be prepared to walke in them'.[239] The idea of obedience to the will or law of God as a covenantal obligation and duty was expressed early on by Beza. In *Abraham sacrifiant* one of the basic lessons was

> 'That if God will us anything to doe
> We must streyt wayes obedient be thereto'.[240]

This obedience to God's 'most perfect pure commaundments' was interpreted by the patriarch's servants as

> '...for the covenants sake
> Which God himselfe did make,
> Betweene him and our maister deere'.[241]

They wondered how the 'covenant can be held', if Isaac, the heir of the covenant was to be slain,[242] and Satan hoped for the violation of the covenant at this point:

> 'Indeede he hath alliance with the trew
> Creator, who hath promist him a new
> Right wondrous things, according whereunto

He hath already done, and still will doe.
But what for that? If stedfastnes him faile
To hold out still: what shall his hope availe?'[243]

But Abraham, recognizing the necessity and importance of obedience in his covenantal relationship with God, knew that the enabling grace of the covenant was promised and certain, and that that was the only way by which he could perform, so he asks:

'I pray thee give me strength and power,
To doe that thou commaundest me this houre'.[244]

This kind of obedience represented for Beza the secret of good government in the church under the ancient covenant, and remained so under the new.[245] The Holy Spirit, sanctifying the hearts of the elect, made them cheerfully to consecrate themselves to God and to observe his law.[246] It was failure at this point which brought decline in the church. The covenant was violated then.

Beza likened the church to a castle which was fortified by the law. But unfaithfulness and neglect caused it to be broken into and plundered by Sophisters and others. The Lord then admonished it by the oath, promise and covenant which was between them to return again to keeping his commandments and submit to his protection and the full defence of the gospel.[247] Again, using the analogy of the bride, Beza said there were two parts to living the Christian life. One was meditation and communion with the Bridegroom, the other 'to order and direct the course of her life according unto her vocation, conformably unto the commaundmentes of God'. But this was only accomplished when Christ accompanied the initial grace of going unto him 'with a second grace of blessing and effecting in us this desire of going unto him'.[248]

The law then had continuing relevance for the regenerate. Where it brought forth death in the unregenerate, its 'true use' was to reprove sin in the believer who agreed and consented to its verdict against his own shorcomings, and therefore continually directed him

to Christ, for the law always 'regardeth and tendeth to Christ'.[249] For Beza the rule of purity in the Christian life could 'from no where els be taken, but from the Lawe of God'.[250] Life in the Spirit, walking with Christ and restoration to the image of God were identified with 'having him and his commandments before our eyes, as we are taught'.[251]

It was because none of the regenerate even could attain perfectly to keeping God's rule of righteousness that continual imputation of Christ's righteousness was necessary for both justification and sanctification, for 'if the very best works of even the holyest men, shoulde bee tryed by the rule of God's wyll, that is to saye by the lawe: I saye they bee synnes'.[252] This then raised the question: How could God be pleased with such works or accept them? Beza's answer reflected Calvin's solution exactly. He said that God loved all righteousness; therfore after a sort he is pleased with that righteousness which he himself has caused to 'stick in us'. But this is not because of any merit or worthiness in the works it produced. They were still polluted by natural corruption. Yet God delighted in the works of the regenerate, imperfect as they were out of his own infinite goodness and grace. The works of the believer were justified through the death of Christ as well as his person. 'Our iustification, and so consequently that life everlasting shall be given to these works'.[253]

This was Beza's way of saying that the conditions of the covenant were contained in the covenant of grace for the elect. In no other way could their works be acceptable to God. 'For God cannot (not even in covenant) allow any other righteousness as worthye of that name, than such as is fully answerable to the law in all points, except he wil be repugnant with himselfe'.[254] The good works of the Christian were called good not because they deserved eternal life, but only because they proceeded from

a good source - the regenerating work of the Spirit - and also because they provided the excellent benefits of being a witness of faith to the believer and a testimony to others.[255]

This same principle applied to the references to hire, wages, reward, requiting and recompense. These were not paid as due debt, but only out of the goodness and grace of God. God gave them to show that the labour of his people was not lost. Wages and rewards were freely promised and given, but they were so designated only because they were given to the worker, not to his works. They were not 'payde as dewty'. Eternal life was given to the worker, but was not paid for his work.[256] Christ alone had earned the wages of righteousness. The believer was made righteous only through faith, but grace paid the reward to the believer as though he had earned it himself.

Good works then were seen by Beza as a necessity in the life of the believer. But they were not a 'brutal', 'legalistic' necessity; they were necessary only because they were the fruit of a necessary faith.[257] This explained why Scripture could speak of good works saving men. It was simply because there were no good works outside of faith in Jesus Christ.[258] The good works were 'the testimonie and effects inseparablie following of faith, and that faith witnessing before God according unto the covenant of the Gospel'.[259] Faith was the central issue in Beza's soteriology. He repeatedly stressed that the amount of space which he devoted to dealing with good works was because he was being constantly accused by his Catholic opponents of disallowing good works altogether.[260]

Summary

It is clear that when the wider field of Beza's work is taken into consideration, and when more attention is given to the content of his theology, rather than to over-concentration on structure and order of *loci* (which in Beza

is very varied, in any case), a significantly different picture of the man and his work emerges than that which has often been portrayed in the past. The charge of introducing scholasticism into Reformed theology, and re-opening 'the road to speculative determinism which Calvin had attempted to close', is without adequate foundation.[261] Beza employed Aristotelian philosophical categories in some of his works, but this was not new in Reformed tradition. Calvin had done the same. Beza may have used them more so than his mentor, but this was largely due to the needs of his more polemical role. His opponents had the privilege of selecting the weapons of warfare, which was why Beza in August 1561 expressed to Calvin an appreciation of Peter Martyr's abilities with respect to the forthcoming Colloquy of Poissy. He said Martyr was skilled in answering scholastic arguments.[262]

Beza himself became more skilled in this field, but there is no evidence that the use of scholastic form affected the content of his Reformed thought. Matter for elucidation was determined entirely by the revelation of God in scripture, and not by any elevation of reason to the place of ultimate authority in religion that would lead to discussion of the older scholastic questions such as how many angels could dance on the head of a pin. When the distinction between form and content is kept in mind, it can be said concerning the use of philosophical tools in explaining Reformed theology that 'Beza was both more the humanist and more the scholastic than Calvin'.[263]

The accusation that 'it was Beza who reverted to the medieval scholastic device of placing predestination under the doctrines of God and providence', subordinating theology in the process to the dominance of predestination also lacks solid supportive evidence.[264] In Beza's confessional and catechetical material, sermons and letters there was no such role given to predestination. Works specifically written on the subject were part of

controversies in which he was embroiled, and should not be considered as normative theological approach. But even in these the doctrine was not divorced from a Christological context or from a warm, pastoral concern.[265] Furthermore, as in Calvin, the covenant was found to be significant in relation to the distinction between general election and those secretly chosen and known only to God who are in the covenant of grace proper. The supposed difference between Calvin and Beza, that the latter was supralapsarian and the former was not, is difficult to sustain. It is certainly an unwarranted assumption to call in such a difference as the basis for concluding that 'There is little surprise, therefore, when we find Beza devoting little attention to such things as the covenant of grace'.[266]

From the evidence examined it is perfectly clear that Beza devoted more than a little attention to the idea of the covenant. One of the surprises of this research has been to find in Beza's works what amounts to a fairly substantial theology of the covenant. It was of sufficient importance to produce the basic theological structure for one of his publications. And this was a later work from the time when Beza was said to have become more scholastic, speculative and supralapsarian.[267]

But more importantly, the doctrine of the covenant was integrated somewhere into the content of nearly all his theological works. Furthermore, Beza did not just consider the doctrine of the covenant in relation to one other doctrine as alleged.[268] It was related to all the doctrines which are usually considered to be foundational in any valid theology of the covenant, including the law of God, the person and work of Christ, predestination, faith and good works. Beza's treatment of the covenant was not so intense and detailed as that of Calvin. Beza did not have the same opportunity in commentaries and exegetical works to develop this area of thought; witness his complaint about being diverted from devoting more time to

direct teaching of the Scriptures. But in the not insignificant contribution he did make in the area of covenantal thought, he followed basically the same lines as were identified in Calvin.

Finally, on the issue of the place of faith and good works in relation to assurance of election and salvation, the Kendall *et.al.* thesis that Beza's commitment to supralapsarianism and a subsequent limited atonement led him to separate Christ, faith and good works, and to base assurance in the latter, was also found to take little cognizance of the full-orbed content and interrelatedness of Beza's thought.[269] For Beza the question of faith and good works was inseparable from election in Christ and from covenantal union with Christ. Despite Bray's assertion to the contrary, Beza *did* follow the pattern of Calvin here. Christ *was* 'the ultimate resolution for the question of assurance'.[270] Faith and good works were the instrument and the effects of that union with Christ, and assurance *was not* 'based unequivocally upon the effects of salvation'.[271] As the instrument of justification and union with Christ, the presence of faith brought the certain knowledge that the promises of God and eternal life belonged to those to whom it was given. The good works which were the inseparable effects of covenantal union with Christ through faith could aid assurance especially in times of weakness, affliction and temptation by pointing back to their infallible source - the merits of Christ alone.

NOTES: Chapter Thirteen

1 J. Raitt, *The Eucharistic Theology of Theodore Beza: Development of the Reformed Doctrine*, (Chambersburg, 1972), 1. The best account of Beza's life is P-F. Geisendorf, *Théodore de Bèze*, (Geneva, 1949), which superseded the older biography by H.M. Baird, *Theodore Beza: The Counsellor of the French Reformation*, (London, 1899). Short biographical snatches are to be found in H.E. Dosker, 'Theodore Beza', *PTR*, 4. (1906), 501-512; Raitt, *Eucharistic Theology*, 1-9; *Shapers of Religious Traditions*, (Yale, 1981), 89-94; J.S. Bray, *Theodore Beza's Doctrine of Predestination*, (Nieuwkoop, 1975), 22-43.

2 Quoted in E.G. Léonard, *A History of Protestantism*, (London, 1967), 2.1-2.

3 T. Beza, *Historie of the Life and Death of Maister John Calvin*, (London, 1564), Aiiib; cf. *An Exhortation to the Reformation of the Churche*, 35 'that noble John Calvine, that man of blessed memorie, and my father in Christe'.

4 See *STC* Nos. 1997-2054. 1.83-84. A work on Beza appeared during his lifetime written by one of his opponents, J. Bolséc, *Histoire de la vie, moeurs, doctrine et deportements de Théodore de Bèze*, (Paris, 1582), and another after his death by his successor A. de la Faye, *Bref discours de la vie et mort de M. Th. de Bèze*, (Geneva 1610). But not until the nineteenth century was much else written, when three German biographies appeared: F.C. Schlosser, *Leben des Th. de Beza*, (Heidelberg, 1809); J.W. Baum, *Theodor Beza, nach handshriftlicheQuellen dargestellt*, (Leipzig, 1843-1852); and H. Heppe, *Theodor Beza, Leben und ausgewählte Schriften*, (Eberfeld, 1861).

5 Compared with Calvin, Beza has been quickly passed over in works of historical and dogmatic theology. Dorner, *History of Protestant Theology* and Harnack, *History of Dogma* ignore him. Cunningham has no more than four references to Beza in his *Historical Theology*, 1.236; 2.543-544,564,573, but does more justice to him in *The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation* 345-412. Barth rarely mentions him *CD*, 3^4.449; 4^3.24. J. PELIKAN does little better in *The Christian Tradition*, IV.192,202,215,218ff,255; and Cunliffe-Jones's *History of Christian Doctrine*, 373, has but one passing reference. Even J.T. McNeill's admirable *History and Character of Calvinism* keeps Beza very much in the shadow of Calvin.

6 W. Kickel, *Vernunft und Offenbarung bei Theodor Beza: zum Problem des Verhältnisses von Theologie, Philosophie und Staat*, (Neukirchen, 1967).

7 R.M. Kingdon considered Beza's political ideas in several works: 'The First Expression of Theodore Beza's Political Ideas', *AFR*, 46. (1955), 88-100; 'Les idées politiques de Bèze d'après son traité de l'autorité du magistrat et le punition des hérétiques', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 22. (1960), 566-569; *Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement 1561-1572*, (Madison, 1967). Several doctoral theses have been published on aspects of Beza's theology: J. Dantine, 'Die Prädestinationslehre bei Calvin und Beza'. PhD Thesis (Göttingen University, 1965); Raitt, *The Eucharistic Theology*; Bray, *Beza's Doctrine of Predestination*; T. Maruyama, *The Ecclesiology of Theodore Beza*, (Geneva, 1978). Numerous articles have been written, all ably assisted by the ongoing publication of the *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*, (Geneva 1960-), of which twelve volumes are available to 1986.

8 Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*, 129. For this stream of thought see also: H.E. Weber, *Reformation, Orthodoxie und Rationalismus*, (Gütersloh, 1937-1951), 1.2; E. Bizer, *Frühorthodoxie und Rationalismus*, (Zurich, 1963), 6-15; B. Hall, 'Calvin against the Calvinists', *John Calvin*, ed. G.E. Duffield, 19-37; J. Dantine. 'Die Prädestination-slehre'; 'Das christologische Problem in Rahmen der Prädestinationslehre von Theodor Beza', *ZKG*, 77. (1966) 81-96; Les Tabelles sur la Doctrine de la Prédestination par Théodore de Bèze', *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie*, 16. (1966), 365-377; W. Kickel, *op.cit.*; P. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, (London, 1967), 13-16; C. Bangs, *Arminius: A Study of the Dutch Reformation*, (Nashville, 1971), 64-80; D. Steinmetz, *Reformers in the Wings*, (Philadelphia, 1971), 162-171; 'The Theology of Calvin and Calvinism', *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Reasearch*, ed. S. Ozment, (St.Louis, 1982), 211-232; J.W. Beardslee III, ed. *Reformed Dogmatics*, (Grand Rapids, 1977), 19-20; Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 29-38; M.C. Bell, 'Was Calvin a Calvinist?', *SJT*, 36. (1983), 535-540.

9 Hall, *op.cit.*, 25; L.B. Tipson, 'The Development of a Puritan Understanding of Conversion'. PhD Thesis (Yale University, 1972), 111.

10 Steinmetz, *Reformers*, 169.

11 Kendall, *op.cit.*, 38.

12 Armstrong, *op.cit.*, 265.

13 Bray, *op.cit.*, 140.

14 *Ibid.*, 142; see also his article, 'The Value of Works in the Theology of Calvin and Beza', *SJT* 4. (1973), 86, where the same conclusion was reached. He thought Bizer, Kickel and Dantine had overplayed the scholastic development in Beza, but that there was justification for

viewing Beza as 'a major step away from this Christological theology of Calvin'.

15 Raitt, *Shapers*, 104.

16 Raitt, *Eucharistic Theology* 73; see also her articles: 'The Person of the Mediator: Calvin's Theology and Beza's Fidelity', *Occasional Papers* No.1., (American Society of Reformation Research 1977), 53-80; 'Beza: Guide for the Faithful Life', *SJT*, 39. (1986), 83.

17 *Ibid.*, vii. n.5.

18 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 142f,159.

19 Letham, 'Beza: A Reassessment', 39.

20 Muller, *op.cit.*, 438.

21 McPhee, 'Conserver or Transformer' 357.

22 J.P. Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism*, 194,207; 'Calvinist Thomism', *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 7, (1976), 442; 'Italian Influences on the Development of Reformed Scholasticism', *SCJ*, 7. (1976), 81-100.

23 *Ibid.*, 207.

24 B. Hägglund discusses the problems of definition with this term in *History of Theology*, trs. G.L. Lund, (St. Louis, 1969), 299-300.

25 T.C. Hall, 'Was John Calvin a Reformer or a Reactionary?', *The Hibbert Journal*, 6. (1907), 171.

26 *Ibid.*, 179-180,181.

27 *Ibid.*, 184.

28 eg. W. Gass, *Geschichte der Protestantischen Dogmatik*, (Berlin, 1854); A. Schweizer, *Die Protestantischen Central Dogmen*, (Zurich, 1884-1886); P. Althaus, *Die Prinzipien*, (Leipzig, 1914).

29 A considerable volume of studies has emerged in this area, notably P.O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains*, (New York, 1961); *Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance*, (Stanford, 1964); E. Cochrane, *The Late Italian Renaissance*, (New York, 1970). On scholastic influence on Lutheranism there is R.D. Preus, *The Importance of Scripture: A Study of the Theology of the Seventeenth Century Lutheran Dogmaticians*, (Mankato, 1955); *The Theology of Post Reformation Lutheranism: A Study of Theological Prologomena*, (St.Louis 1970); and R. Scharlemann, *Aquinas and Gerhard: Theological Controversy and Construction in Medieval and Protestant Scholasticism*, (New Haven, 1964). In the Reformed area in addition to those already cited there is R.M. Kingdon, ed. *Transition and Revolution: Problems and*

Issues of European Renaissance and Reformation History, (Minneapolis, 1974).

30 Armstrong, *op.cit.*, 32; Bray, *Predestination*, 12-15.

31 Bray, *op.cit.*, 15.

32 Bizer, *op.cit.*, 6ff.

33 Luther, *Disputatio contra scholasticam theologiam* (1520), *WA*, 1.221-228.

34 On Ramus see: F.P. Graves, *Peter Ramus and the Educational Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, (New York, 1912); J. Moltmann, 'Zur Bedeutung des Petrus Ramus für Philosophie und Theologie in Calvinismus', *ZKG*, 68. (1957); Miller, *New England Mind*, 116-142; W.J. Ong, *Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue*, (Cambridge, Mass. 1958); *Ramus and Talon Inventory: A Short-title Inventory of the Published Works of Peter Ramus 1517-1572 and Omar Talon (ca.1510-1562) in their original and in their visibly altered forms with related material*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1958); W.S. Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England 1500-1700*, (New York, 1961); K.L. Sprunger, 'Ames, Ramus and the Method of Puritan Theology', *HTR*, 59. (1966), 133-151; *The Learned Doctor William Ames*, (Urbana, 1972); C. Desmaze, *P. Ramus sa vie, ses écrits, sa mort (1515-1572)*, (Geneva, 1970); N. Bruyère, *Méthode et Dialectique dans L'oeuvre de La Ramée Renaissance et âge Classique*, (Paris, 1984; C. Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Universite de Geneve*, 1.110-115, 133.

35 LaVallee, 'Calvin's Criticism of Scholastic Theology'.

36 see *Infra* ; On Calvin's humanism see: B. Hall, 'John Calvin: Humanist and Theologian', (Historical Association Pamphlets, 1956); Q. Breen, *John Calvin: A Study in French Humanism*, (New York, 1968).

37 Quoted by McNeill, *History and Character*, 196. When Professor of Greek at Lausanne, Beza wrote a biblically based play for the students, *Abraham Sacrifiant*, in a self-confessed attempt to turn his humanist talents to better use than he had put them in the more worldly volume of poems, *Juvenilia*, which he had written in Paris ten years earlier. Of the latter he wrote, 'The very remembrance of them irketh me now at the heart'; see *A Tragedie of Abraham's Sacrifice*, trs. A. Golding, (London, 1577), 5, and *Les Juvenilia*, trs. A. Machard, (Geneva, 1970).

38 Bray, *op.cit.*, 42-43; Raitt, 'Beza: Guide', 84-85; McPhee, *op.cit.*, 143-201, 352-358.

39 Muller, 'Predestination and Christology', 41.

40 McPhee, *op.cit.*, 165-176.

41 Muller, *op.cit.*, 42.

42 Beza, *An Exhortation to the Reformation*, 35a-b.

43 See Bangs, *op.cit.*. 69; Weir, '*Foedus Naturale:*', 84-91; and cf. Bray, *op.cit.*, 70ff, 120-122; Maruyama, *op.cit.*, 139ff.

44 The *Confession* was translated into Latin in 1560 by Beza and remained unrevised through many editions during his lifetime. An English translation was produced probably by Robert Fyll, entitled *A Briefe and Pithy Summe of the Christian Fayth*, (London, 1585).

45 This work was used in the theological instruction of his pupils by Robert Rollock, the first principal of Edinburgh University, who also wrote a brief analysis of it, entitled *Prolegomena in primum librum Quaestionum Theodori Bezae*, see Rollock, *Select Works*, 1.lxv,lxxxix. The first English translation of Beza's work was by A. Golding, *A Booke of Christian Questions and Answers*, (London, 1572). The second volume *Quaestionum et Responsionum Christianarum pars altera, quae est de sacramentis* Geneva 1576, was translated by J. Field, *The Other Parte of Christian Question and Answeares, which is concerning the sacraments*, (London, 1580).

46 *Propositions and Principles of Divinitie, propounded and disputed in the universitie of Geneva*, trs. [J.Penry] (Edinburgh, 1591).

47 J. de Witt, 'Place of the Westminster Assembly' 347.

48 Hall, *op.cit.*, 26,28; Bray, *op.cit.*, 9,31-32.

49 Maruyama, *op.cit.*, 243.

50 See McNeill. 'The Doctrine of the Ministry in Reformed Theology', 87-97; Hall, *op.cit.*, 26; Maruyama, *op.cit.*, 228-242, who unfortunately does not attempt to discuss Beza's ecclesiology in relation to Calvin. See also R.M. Kingdon, *Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement 1564-1572*, (Madison, 1967), 37-148.

51 Calvin, *Inst.*, IV.6.10.

52 *Ibid.*, IV.4.1-4; IV.5-12; *On the Necessity of Reforming the Church*, *CR*, 24. 469ff; 'Letter to Grindal', *Puritan Manifestoes*, 43-55.

53 Quoted in McNeill, *op.cit.*, 85. On Beza's attitude to episcopacy see also his *A Discourse of the True Visible Markes of the Catholique Churche*, trs. I[ohn] S[tockwood], (London, [1582]), *passim*.

54 *Contra* J. Pannier, *Calvin et l'épiscopat*, (Paris, 1927), who appears to be alone in suggesting that Calvin saw episcopacy as the only true form of church government and wanted to see it established.

55 Weir, *op.cit.*, 84; cf. Kickel, *op.cit.*, 99,106-107,136-137,149-150; Hall, *op.cit.*, 27-28; Bray, *op.cit.*, 6, 117; Beardslee, *op.cit.*, 19-20; Steinmetz, *Reformers*

in the Wings, 168-169; Heppe, *Dogmatics*, 146-148; Armstrong, *op.cit.*, 27-42,198-199.

56 Beza, English edition of the *Summa totius* used is *The Treasure of Trueth*, trs. Iohn Stockwood, (London, 1581). The work was first translated by Stockwood in 1576, but in the preface he refers to an even earlier translation by Whittingham.

57 *An Other Briefe Confession of Fayth* was appended to *Briefe and Pithy*, 324-445. The *Catechismus Compendiarius* was translated as *A Little Catechisme*, (London, 1578). The content of these three instruction manuals is revealing. The *Confessio Fidei* has seven articles on the unity, trinity, providence and fatherhood of God. The paragraph on providence is very brief and general, with no reference to predestination. There follows twenty-six articles on the person and work of Christ, fifty-one articles on the Holy Spirit and the application of salvation, and fifty-nine articles on the church and judgment. The latter contains a lengthy comparison with the Church of Rome for the benefit of Beza's father. *Catechismus Compendiarius* is a much smaller document following exactly the same pattern without the excursus on the church. The *Altera Brevis* is chiefly on the application of salvation, beginning with the question as to how a sinner can be rightly related to a righteous God, and positing in reply the following *loci*: the need of a mediator, faith, union with Christ issuing in sanctification, and the sacraments.

58 *Quest.and Ans.*, 1-2.

59 *Ibid.*, 57.

60 *Ibid.*, 77; cf. 70, 87.

61 In *Tractationes Theologicae*, (Geneva, 1582), 3.324-365.

62 *Prop.and Prin.*, 2.

63 *Ibid.*, 4-7.

64 *Ibid.*, 17.

65 *Ibid.*, 17-23.

66 Kickel, *op.cit.*, 167-169.

67 *Treas.of Trueth*, B2a-b; cf. I6, K5b-6a; *Quest.and Ans.*, 35b, 70, 77.

68 *Ibid.*, C3b. This kind of distinction did not originate with Beza, although Bray, *Beza's Doctrine*, 91, maintained that it 'became Beza's most significant original contribution to the question of predestination'.

69 *Ibid.*, D5-6.

70 *Ibid.*, C3b, C6b; cf. *Briefe and Pithie*, 4ff; *Ser.on Cant.*, 2:1-2 (210); and *De Praedestinationis Doctrina*,

Tract. Theol., 3.404 where Christ is referred to as the foundation of election ('Christus electionis fundamentum'). Contrast the denial of this by Kendall, *op.cit.*, 32, and see Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism*, 132 n.18 who viewed a Christological orientation as compatible with the predestinarianism of the Reformed Aristotelianism he attributed to both Martyr and Beza.

71 *Ibid.*, D6b. Beza never allowed Christology to be separated from the doctrine of God. cf. *Briefe and Pithy*, 4-14; *Quest.and Ans.*, 2bff; *De Praed.*, *Tract. Theol.* 3.404; *N.T. Annotations*, trs. L. Tomson, (London, 1599), Eph. 1:4.

72 *Briefe and Pithy* , 2-4; *Prop.and Prin.*, 4-7; *Ad Acta Colloqui Montisbelgardensis*, (Geneva, 1587-1588), Part 2. 199-201 'Aliter igitur Christus considerandus est ut causa praedestinationis efficiens cum Patre et Spiritus Sancto: aliter ut primum ipsius praedestionationis, de servandis per misericordiam in ipso electio effectum'.

73 *Treas.of Trueth*, D7a-E1b.

74 *Ibid.*, E2a; cf. *Briefe and Pithy*, 15-18.

75 *Ibid.*, G6a-b.

76 Kendall, *op.cit.*, 29f; Letham, 'Saving Faith', 146-147; Hall, *op.cit.*, 27-28; Armstrong, *op.cit.*, 41-42.

77 Beza, *Treas.of Trueth*, F5b; *Quest.and Ans.*, 79b-80.

78 Letham, *op.cit.*, 1.143, 148, 153, 277; McKee, 'The Idea of the Covenant', 19, also referred to the idea of the covenant in Beza, but again concluded it was not elaborated or developed.

79 Beza, *Sermons sur les Trois Premiers Chapitres du Cantique des Cantiques de Solomon*, ([Geneva], 1586); trs. J. Harmar, *Maister Bezaes Sermons upon the First Three Chapters of the Canticle of Canticles*, (Oxford, 1587). The sermons were preached during 1584, and there is an interesting history behind them. When Sebastion Castellion (1515-1563) came to Geneva in 1543 he questioned the canonicity of the Song of Songs regarding it as 'indecent and immodest', and this became a major issue in his conflict with Calvin eventually forcing him to leave the city. The traditional method of interpreting the book was allegorical, ie. as a type of the union of Christ with the church. Calvin who normally favoured an historical-literal interpretation of Scripture, took the traditional view here, as did Luther. (*CR*, 39.675; *WA*, 31^2.588ff). Calvin did not write a commentary on the book, but Beza, who carried on the defence of Calvin against his critics, and who was familiar with Bernard of Clairvaux's *33 Sermons on the Canticles*, translated the book into Latin in 1548 and then published his thirty-one sermons following the allegorical interpretation but stressing the historical

reality of the type. See Beza, *Life of Calvin* ; *Ane Answer Made the fourth day*, 23a; *The Pope's Canons*, trs. T. S[tocker], (London, 1584),D1b; also P. Polman, *L'Elément historique dans la controverse religieuse du XVIe Siècle*, (Gembloux, 1932), 83; Geisendorf, *op.cit.*, 336; *Wendel, op.cit.* 82; Maruyama, *op.cit.* 148ff; A.N.S. Lane, 'Calvin's Use of Bernard of Clairvaux'. BD Thesis (Oxford University, 1982).

80 *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:1 (5).

81 *Other Parte*, E3a; *The Pope's Canons*, Gijb-Giija

82 *Ibid.*, 1:1 (7).

83 *Ibid.*, 1:1 (9).

84 *Ibid.*, 1:2 (19).

85 *Ibid.*, 1:4-5 (72,cf.78-79).

86 *Ibid.*, 2:11-13 (269,289), 3:11 (433) etc.; Kendall, *op.cit.*, 36.

87 *Ibid.*, 2:8-10 (249-250).

88 *Ibid.*

89 *Ibid.*, 2:8-10 (251); cf. 2:15-17 (300).

90 *Ibid.*, 2:8-10 (251).

91 *Ibid.*, 2:15-17 (299).

92 *Ser.sur Pass.*, 938; cf. 1051-1052.

93 *Ibid.*, 939-941.

94 *Brief and Pithy*, 14; cf. *An Other Briefe*, 330; and *Ane Answer made*, 86, where Beza cites Augustine including in the church as members of Christ 'Abel, Enoch, Noe, Abraham and the prophets'.

95 *Ibid.*, 15.

96 *Ibid.*, 18b (error in pag.).

97 *N.T.Ann.*, Gal. 4:21-26; cf. Rom. 10:6.

98 *Ibid.*, Heb. 9:6.

99 *Briefe and Pithy*, 100.

100 *Ibid.*, 102-104; cf. 126-128, 130-131; cf. *N.T.Ann.*, Rom. 4:9-11; *An Other Briefe*, 337ff.

101 *Responsio ad...P. Claudii de Sanctes*, (Geneva, 1567), *Tract.Theol.*, 3.17-31; see 10, 16 etc. Cf. also *Responsio ad Francisci Baldvini*, (Geneva, 1563), *Tract.Theol.*, 2.200.

102 *Other Parte*, G4a-L8a.

103 *Ser.on Cant.*, 2:3-4 (216).

104 *Ibid.*, 1:3 (46).

105 *Prop. and Prin.*, 167.

106 *Ibid.*, 167-168; cf. *Resp. ad Claudii*, 16; *The Other Parte*, E2b,E3b.

107 *Ibid.*, 168-169.

108 *Ibid.*, 177. Beza used many such phrases in relation to infants, eg. 'shewe the conveyances of the covenaunt', 'thought to belong unto the covenaunt','reckoned in the covenaunt', 'comprehended in the covenaunt', 'engraffment into the covenaunt', 'comprized in the covenaunt' *Other Parte*, H8a, I1a-b, I4a,b; *An Other Briefe*, 344.

109 *Ibid.*, 178; cf. *Other Parte*, H8a, I1a-b, I4a-b, K3a; *Briefe and Pithy*, 126-128; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 2.29-30.

110 *Treas. of Trueth*, G5b; *De Praed.*, 62.

111 *Other Parte*, H8a, I1a; *Briefe and Pithie*, 126-127.

112 *Ibid.*, I4a-I5b; *Prop. and Prin.*, 178; cf. *Treas. of Trueth*, L5b-L6a. Beza constantly warned against rash judgment as to who was elect; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 1.327-328.

113 *Ibid.*, K3a; 'Letter to Grindal', *Puritan Manifestoes*, 53-54.

114 *Ibid.*, K6b; *Prop. and Prin.*, 179.

115 *Ibid.*, I7aff.

116 *Ibid.*, I1; *De Praed.*, 56-57,59,63-64; *Ane Answer*, 8b; *Job Expounded*, (Cambridge, [1589]), 1:1 (B4a); *Ser. on Cant.*, 3:2-3 (318).

117 *Ibid.*, I1b; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 2.26-27.

118 *N. T. Ann.*, Rom. 9:6.

119 *Pope's Canons*, Giiijb; *De Praed.*, 59.

120 *Ser. on Cant.*, 2:8-10 (318ff, 325ff).

121 *Ibid.*, 2:8-10 (254).

122 *N. T. Ann.*, Rom. 10:1-2; cf. 3:3.

123 *Ibid.*, Rom. 10:16.

124 *Ibid.*, Rom. 10:17-21.

125 *The Psalmes of David, Truly Opened and explained by Paraphrasis*, trs. A. Gilbie, (London, 1581), Ps.89:34.

126 *Ser. on Cant.*, 2:8-10 (318ff).

127 *Ane Answer*, 7b; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 2.27.

128 *Ser. sur Pass.*, 1051-1052.

129 *Treas. of Trueth*, G7a-H2b.

130 *Ibid.*, H3b-H4b.

131 *Ane Answer*, 8b-9a; *Quest. and Ans.*, 80a-b.

132 *Ser.on Cant.*, 2:8-10 (254-255).

133 *A Little Catechisme*, (London, 1578), Aib.

134 *Ser.on Cant.*, 3:11 (401); cf. 1:7 (109-110); *Job Exp.*, 1:13 (E5a-b), 1:19 (F2a); *Ecclesiastes or The Preacher*, (Cambridge, [1589]),3:13 (B3a); *Props. and Prins.*, 15,38,40,63,204; *N.T.Ann*, Rom. 9:20.

135 *Little Catechisme*, Aib.

136 *Other Parte* I3a; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 1.332-333.

137 *Briefe and Pithie*, 84-85.

138 *N.T.Ann.*, Rom. 5:14; cf. Rom.1:17, 2:14; *Job Exp.*, B5b; *Ser.on Cant.*, 3:11 (404); *Prop.and Prin.*, 2, 64 where Beza held that though fallen there were still 'certaine notions and sparks of the knowledge of God in the mind of every man, which cannot altogether be put out'.

139 *Briefe and Pithie*, 85-86; cf. *An Other Briefe*, 325.

140 *Ibid.*, 87-88.

141 *Ibid.*, 90-93.

142 *N.T.Ann.*, Mt. 5:17-18.

143 *Ibid.*, Mt. 5:19; *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:7 (124-125), 3:11 (416-417).

144 *Ser.on Cant.*, 3:11 (419-421); *Ser.sur Pass.*, 1051.

145 *Ibid.*, 1:7 (121-122).

146 *N.T.Ann.*, Gal.3:10ff.

147 *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:7 (129).

148 *Quest.and Ans.*, 56b.

149 *Ser.on Cant.*, 3:11 (433); cf. *Prop.and Prin.*, 225-226.

150 *Prop.and Prin.*, 225.

151 *Quest.and Ans.*, 43b.

152 *Briefe and Pithy*, 15-16; *Prop.and Prin.*, 46.

153 *Ibid.*, 18.

154 Beza frequently used the concept of the second Adam, eg. *Quest.and Ans.*, 44aff; *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:2 (30); *Ser.sur Pass.*, 88-92,185,790-792; *Ser.sur Resurr.*, 41-42,289.

155 *Briefe and Pithy*, 20-21; *An Other Briefe*, 325-326; *Quest.and Ans.*, 3b,7b.

156 *Ibid.*, 18b (irr. pagination).

157 *Quest.and Ans.*, 37a; *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:3 (50).

158 *Ibid.*, 37b.

159 *Ibid.*, 40b-41a.

160 *Ibid.*, 42a-b.

161 *Ibid.*, 42b-43a.

162 *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:7 (116-117).

163 *Ibid.*, 1:7 (118), 1:12-14 (190).

164 *Prop.and Prin.*, 111-112; *Briefe and Pithy*, 44.

165 *N.T.Ann.*, Gal.5:22-23.

166 *Treas.of Trueth*, I8b-K3b.

167 *N.T.Ann.*, Rom. 6:2-4;8:9; *Treas. of Trueth*, H8a; cf. Calvin, *Inst.*, II.8.6,18; III.2.30,35; III.6.3; III.11.10; III.22.7,10; III.24.5; IV.15.6, 12; IV.16.17; *Com.on Hos.*, 2:19-20; *Com.on Mal.*, 2:14; *Com.on John*, 15:1ff; *Com.on II Cor.*, 7:1; *Com.on Eph.*, 2:4; 5:29-32; *Com.on Phil.*, 3:12; *Com.on I John*, 3:5, 5:11,20; *Ser.on Job*, 31:9-15; see *infra*, 2.7.

168 *Treas.of Trueth*, E4a.

169 *Ibid.*, E5a; cf. Calvin, *Inst.*, III.1.1,3,4; III.2.35; IV.17.12,33; *Com.on Eph.*, 3:7; *Com.on I John*, 5:20.

170 *Quest.and Ans.*, 33b; cf. Calvin, *Inst.*, II.10.2; III.14:6; *Com.on Hos.*, 2:19,23.

171 *Ibid.*, 34b.

172 *Ibid.*, 35a,37a.

173 *Ibid.*, 35b; cf. Calvin, *Inst.*, IV.17.1,7.

174 *Ibid.*, 36b; cf. *The Other Parte*, E3a, where Beza pointed to the use of the idea of a 'covenant of men' and of the marriage covenant as the only suitable illustrations of the union of Christ with his people; cf. Calvin, *Inst.*, II.12.7; III.1.3;IV.19.38; *Com.on Eph.*, 5:28-33; *Ser.on Eph.*, 5:31-33 (614-615).

175 *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:2 (21).

176 *Ibid.*, 2:1-2 (204); *Ser.sur Pass.*, 46; *Pope's Canons*, Gijb-Giijb; cf. Calvin, *Inst.*, III.15.5; IV.15.6; IV.17.38.

177 *Ibid.*, 1:2 (21).

178 *Ibid.*, 2:15-17 (302-303).

179 *Ibid.*, 1:1 (5).

180 *Ibid.*; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 1.335; 2.6-7.

181 *Ibid.*, 2:15-17 (297).

182 *Briefe and Pithy*, 102.

183 *Two Very Lerned Sermons*, trs. T.W[ilcocks], (London, 1588), 47; cf. *Quest.and Ans.*, 38b-39b; *Job Exp.*, 1:2 (C1b).

184 *Treas.of Trueth*, F5b; *Quest.and Ans.*, 23a-b,39a-b; *Briefe and Pithy*, 30; *Prop.and Prin.*, 47-48.

185 *Ibid.*, F1a; cf. *Little Cat.*, Aiiia.

186 *Briefe and Pithy*, 31.

187 *An Other Briefe*, 334-335, 325; cf.328.

188 *N.T.Ann.*, Rom.3:27-28.

189 *Quest.and Ans.*, 24a; cf. 23a.

190 *Prop.and Prin.*, 178.

191 *The Other Parte*, I2a-b; cf. *Ser.on Cant*, 3:5-8 (353).

192 *Treas.of Trueth*, F1b-F2a; cf. *Quest.and Ans.*, 29b-30b.

193 *Ibid.*, F5b.

194 *Two Lerned Ser.*, 47: *N.T.Ann.*, Rom.3:3; *Little Cat.*, Aiiia etc.

195 *Quest.and Ans*, 23b.

196 *Briefe and Pithy*, 30-31.

197 *Ibid.*, 26-139; 26-27. cf. also *Job Exp.*, G1a,K3b,H2b; *Ser.sur Pass.*, 547; *Ser.sur Resurr.*, 271.

198 *Ibid.*, 79, 81.

199 *Prop.and Prin.*, 49-50.

200 *An Other Briefe*, 329.

201 *Ibid.*, 334.

202 *Prop.and Prin.*, 48-49.

203 *Quest.and Ans.*, 82a.

204 *Ibid.*, 82a-b. Beza differentiated at this point the case of the reprobate. While the ordinance of election was the efficient cause of faith, so that salvation was entirely of grace, the ordinance of reprobation was not the cause of unbelief. The will of man, while still subject to the ordinance, was the first efficient cause of unbelief. With that, said Beza, we must be content.

205 *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:12-14 (190).

206 *Treas.of Trueth*, Ia-b.

207 *Briefe and Pithy*, 30-31; cf. *Quest.and Ans.*, 24a.

208 *Ibid.*, 34; Kendall, *op.cit.*, 34, totally misrepresents Beza when he says that 'What Beza does not do is to point men to Christ, he points men to faith'. cf. Beza, *Quest.and Ans.*, 58a: *Qu.* You conclude then, that all

things necessarye for our salvation are founde in Christ alone, to whome we cleave by faith? *An.* I conclude so indeede: yea and also that the same is the only knowledge of salvation.'

209 *Ser.on Cant.*, 2:15-17 (297).

210 *Briefe and Pithy*, 96.

211 *Prop.and Prin.*, 48.

212 *Briefe and Pithy*, 71, 76.

213 *Ibid.*, 76.

214 *Treas.of Trueth*, G2a-b.

215 *Ibid.*, K5b; *Briefe and Pithy*, 72-73.

216 Kendall. *op.cit.*, 35-37. Kendall exaggerates the place of works in this respect. He says that Beza separated faith and sanctification into two works, and that 'Beza delays assurance until the effects are there'. But for Beza there was no faith without effects, and furthermore the effects were only introduced as aids in cases of difficulty and doubt. Kendall makes a generality out of exceptional cases, and ignores Beza's clear statements on faith as the basis of assurance.

217 Beza, *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:2 (23-24).

218 *Treas.on Trueth*, F5b-F6a.

219 *Briefe and Pithy*, 76.

220 *Treas.of Trueth*, K6a-b.

221 *Briefe and Pithy*, 68.

222 *Ibid.*, 71.

223 *Treas.of Trueth*, G2b.

224 *Ibid.*, I6b, K5b-K6a; *Briefe and Pithy*, 71-73.

225 *Briefe and Pithy*, 47ff; cf. *An Other Briefe*, 225.

226 *N.T.Ann.*, Rom.6:24, Eph.1:4; *Quest.and Ans.*, 53b; *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:3 (49-50); *Ser.sur Pass.*, 68; *Ser.sur Resurr.*, 25-26.

227 Bray, 'The Value of Works', 83. The statement that 'one discovers in Beza's works a bold, almost brutal, demand for good works', is a misrepresentation of Beza's position.

228 Beza, *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:3 (50); *Briefe and Pithy*, 36-43

229 *Briefe and Pithy*, 44-46.

230 *Ibid.*, 47-52.

231 *N.T.Ann.*, Rom.6:2-4, 8:4, 8:9.

232 *Quest.and Ans.*, 45a.

233 *Ibid.*, 45b-46a.

234 *N.T.Ann.*, Heb.7:18; *Ser.sur Pass.*, 139; *Prop.and Prin.*, 63, 225-226.

235 *Lex Dei, Moralis, Ceremonialis, et Civilis, ex Libris Mosis Excerpta*, 1577, 1.

236 *Ser.on Cant.*. 3:11 (404). There follows a lengthy discussion on the stability and perpetuity of the moral law. Beza claimed that Rome had often abolished the moral law and retained the ceremonial law (405-418).

237 *Briefe and Pithy*, 53-55; *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:2 (37); *Prop.and Prin.*, 59-63.

238 *Ibid.*, 94.

239 *Ibid.*, 95.

240 *Abraham's Sacrifice*, 17.

241 *Ibid.*, 16.

242 *Ibid.*, 33.

243 *Ibid.*, 10.

244 *Ibid.*, 12.

245 *Ser.on Cant.*, 3:9-10 (260ff).

246 *An Other Briefe*, 335; cf. *N.T.Ann.*, Rom.6:2-4; 8:15.

247 *Pope's Canons*, Giiijb-Gva; *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:2 (32-34); cf. *Prop.and Prin.*, 103,104 for a doctrine of repentance in relation to faith and continuing obedience, similar to Calvin. Beza clearly taught that faith was the 'mother' of repentance, yet Kendall. *op.cit.*, 35, makes the accusation that he 'reverses Calvin's order of faith and repentance'.

248 *Ser.on Cant.*, 2:8-10 (242-243).

249 *N.T.Ann.*, Rom.7:15-23, 8:3-4, 10:4-5.

250 *Ibid.*, 1 John 3:4.

251 *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:3 (66); 1:7 (113-114).

252 *Quest.and Ans.*, 50.

253 *Ibid.*, 51b-52a; cf. *Ser.on Cant.*, 2:15-17 (297); *Prop.and Prin.*, 61-62; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 1.367.

254 *Ibid.*, 52a.

255 *Ibid.*, 57a; *Briefe and Pithy*, 66; *Little Cat.*, Aiiib-Aiiiib; *Job Exp.*, 1:1 (B8b); *Prop.and Prin.*, 62.

256 *Ibid.*, 53a-b; cf. *Brief and Pithy*, 65; *Job Exp.*, 1:1 (C1a; *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:3 (50).

257 *Ibid.*, 53b.

258 *Briefe and Pithy*, 66-67. Kendall, *op.cit.*, 36, virtually stands this assertion of Beza's on its head when he says that 'from Beza's descriptions we may fear that our good works are the moral virtues of the unregenerate'.

259 *Ser.on Cant.*, 1:7 (130).

260 *Briefe and Pithy*, 52, 67.

261 Hall, *op.cit.*, 27.

262 Beza, 'Bèze à Calvin', 30 Aug. 1561, *Correspondance*, 3.143.

263 Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism*, 202.

264 Hall, *op.cit.*, 27.

265 Beardslee, *op.cit.*, 19-20.

266 Letham, 'Reassessment', 29.

267 Letham, *'Saving Faith'*, 144, 154; 'Reassessment', 38.

268 *Ibid.*, 148.

269 Kendall, *op.cit.*, 13-14,34-35; Barth, *CD*, 2^2.335-336; Kickel, *op.cit.*, 150-153; Bray, 'Value of Works', 80-86.

270 Bray, 'Value of Works', 85.

271 *Ibid.*, 82.

PART FOUR

POST-REFORMATION DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Heidelberg Story: Zacharius Ursinus

Since Beza's doctrine of the covenant has been largely ignored, it is not surprising that no attempt has been made to examine his influence on contemporary or later exponents of covenantal theology, or how he may have been influenced by his contemporaries in this area. It was noted earlier that federal theology was often supposed to be a reaction to Bezean scholasticism and supralapsarianisn.[1] The assumption that there could be no correspondence between Beza and the federalists appears to follow. Kendall, interestingly enough, did regard the Heidelberg divines, Zacharius Ursinus (1534-1583), Casper Olevianus (1536-1587), Girolamo Zanchius (1516-1590), and the English Puritan, William Perkins, as drawing largely from Beza. But as he erred seriously in his interpretation of Calvin and Beza, his conclusion that the Heidelberg writers 'have in common with Beza a qualitatively different doctrine' from that of Calvin needs to be examined.[2]

It is to the Heidelberg theologians, especially Ursinus and Olevianus that attention must now be given. Their importance in the development of covenantal theology is indisputable. Since Heppe pointed to them as the originators of federal theology, on the grounds of their associating the covenant with the created order,[3] others have asserted that 'the identifying feature of federal theology is that of the prelapsarian covenant of works', and that this arose in Heidelberg.[4]

Ursinus (or Bear) was born in Breslau in Silesia, and studied at Wittemburg with Melanchthon for seven years, before proceeding by way of Strasbourg, Basel and Lausanne to Geneva where he associated with Calvin in 1557. He began to teach in Lutheran Breslau in 1559, but a thesis

which he presented on the sacraments led to his dismissal because of its Calvinist orientation. He then went to Zurich where he studied further with Bullinger and Martyr. On the recommendation of the latter, the Elector Frederick III, who was seeking to establish the Reformed Church in the Palatinate, invited Ursinus in 1561 to the principalship of the *Collegium Sapientiae*, and the following year to lecture in dogmatics in Heidelberg University. There he remained until the restoration of Lutheranism in Heidelberg after Frederick's death in 1577, when he removed to Neustadt an der Hardt to continue teaching in the *Collegium Casimirianum*. Ursinus became best known for the leading role he played in the authorship of the *Heidelberg Catechism* which was commissioned by Frederick the year after Ursinus arrived in the city.[5]

Ursinus' theology of the covenant has yet to be fully researched, but it has been commented upon widely in articles, with conflicting conclusions.[6] Those who begin with the presupposition that a unilateral covenant excludes any bilateral element, have assigned Ursinus to the bilateral category. It is claimed that he followed Melanchthon's and Bullinger's mutuality of the covenant, and that he espoused 'a reciprocal, mutual contractual ...anthropocentric conditional covenant formulation', which destroyed the gratuitous character of faith placing it 'within the reach of anyone who wills to have it'.[7] This led to difficulty with Ursinus' statements regarding faith and assurance, his doctrine of double predestination and his constant interchangeable use of *testamentum*, *foedus* and *pactum*, but the way out was simply to describe him in these areas as being 'inconsistent' and 'a bit of an enigma'.[8]

In addition to this question, the other area in which Ursinus' importance with respect to covenantal theology has been singled out arises from the fact that he was the first to use the terms *foedus creationis* and *foedus naturale*. There is a strong difference of opinion as to the influence

upon Ursinus which led to his articulation of a covenant-of-works schema in these terms.[9] Heppe's hope of presenting German Reformed theology as a moderate reaction against the excesses of Calvinistic predestinarianism, led him to discover it (including its covenantal theology) solely as the child of Melanchthon.[10] No one has seriously accepted this thesis in its entirety, although the idea of viewing covenantal theology as a protest movement continued.[11] So, too, did the idea that Melanchthon's theology of natural law provided the base upon which Ursinus built his bilateral view of the covenant and produced the *foedus naturale*.[12]

Ursinus used the idea of the covenant throughout his theological career. It appeared in the first paragraph of his earliest work, the *Catechesis, summa theologiae per quaestiones et responsiones exposita: sive, capita religionis Christianae continens* [1562], sometimes called the *Catechesis maior* to distinguish it from the *Catechesis minor perspicua brevitate Christianam fidem complecten* (1562).[13] Both of these were early catechetical efforts paving the way for the famous *Heidelberg Catechism*, and for Ursinus' *magnum opus*, the eventual publication of the text of the *Catechism* with an extensive commentary: *Explicationes Catecheseos Palatinae, sive corpus theologiae*.[14] This work was published in Neustadt (1584) under the title *Doctrinae Christianae compendium sive commentarii catechetici*, but it can be regarded as the substance of Ursinus' weekly lectures on the *Catechism* from 1563 onwards.

The structure and method of Ursinus' theological works furnishes further proof of the variety of presentation employed by Reformed writers. The order of *loci* in the *Summa Theologicae* was faith, law, prayer, the ministry of the church and the sacraments; in the *Catechesis minor* it was faith, the sacraments, law and prayer.[15] The *Explicationes* followed the general

divisions of the *Catechism*. First, a preamble dealt with catechizing, the relationship of true religion with philosophy and reason, and the place and use of the Scriptures.[16] Secondly, 'Of Man's Misery', dealing with creation, the fall, sin and free-will.[17] Thirdly, 'Of Man's Deliverance' covering the Mediator, the covenant, the gospel, faith, was followed by a point-by-point exposition of the Apostles's Creed, with a section on predestination inserted after that on the church, and rounded off with a treatment of justification, the sacraments and excommunication.[18] The final division, 'Of Man's Thankfulness', explained conversion, good works, the law of God and prayer.[19] In his *Loci theologici traditi* another order occurs, beginning with the Scriptures, then the unity and trinity of God, creation of the world, angels and man, providence, sin, free-will, law and the Mediator.[20]

Ursinus' method was pedagogical. His aim was always to explain man's relationship with God. To this end he was prepared to employ philosophy and logic, which he saw as still containing rays of the wisdom of God impressed upon the minds of men in creation. But such were entirely natural, corrupted by sin and woefully inadequate to reconcile men with God. This required the revelation of the law and the gospel which comprised the Scriptures and was known not by nature but through grace alone.[21]

The analytic approach of Ursinus has led to his being regarded as a Protestant scholastic.[22] This view finds support in his wide use of Aristotelian categories and methods of argument. Many of his arguments, for example those on sin, correspond with Beza's in *Quaestiones et Responsiones*.[23] Further evidence in this direction can be gleaned from his defence of Aristotelianism against Ramus' dialectical method.[24] But on the other hand, the Heidelberg theologians, including Ursinus, have been viewed as federalists who utilized Ramist methodology in order to blunt the Aristotelian, scholasticism of Beza's high

Calvinism.[25] Here again evidence can be gathered from Ursinus' writings to support this view. In the *Explicationes*, where Aristotelian arguments were prevalent, no fewer than ten Ramist tables are also to be found.[26] Clearly, Ursinsus' defence of Aristotelianism did not prevent him from utilizing Ramistic method when appropiate. The truth is that for Ursinus all methods, whether Ramist or Aristotelian, were ancilliaries to be employed in setting out his theology in his own peculiar form of organization in order to serve the twofold purpose he had in mind. One was to catechize the people in a way that showed the doctrines of the faith as the foundation of true religion. The other was to assist theological education in the schools by providing *loci communes* as a basis for further study of the Scriptures.[27]

There is no doubt, however, about the content of Ursinus' theology. It reflected a strong Reformed Calvinist interpretation. This was evident in the eucharistic controversy with the Lutherans which brought him to Heidelberg in the first place. It has also been demonstrated conclusively that with respect to his Christology and doctrine of predestination he stood in the Calvinian/Bezean stream.[28] The same can be said of his theology of the covenant.

Unity and Diversity

In keeping with those who preceded him in the Reformed tradition, Ursinus also stressed the unity and diversity of the covenant: 'There is but one Covenaunt in substance, and matter: two in circumstances, or administration', he said.[29] The unity he argued from the same divine origin of both, the same parties involved, the same Mediator in both, the 'one meane of reconcilement; one faith; one way of salvation of all who are saved, and have been saved even from the beginning of the world unto the end'.[30] The promise of grace, that is, of forgiveness,

regeneration and eternal life, was vouchsafed to both the Old Testament and New Testament believers, as was the means by which union with God was effected: 'The principall conditions whereby we are bound unto God, and God to us...are both before and after Christ all the same'.[31]

For Ursinus there was only one covenant of grace in both Testaments, but the differing administration or circumstances and lesser conditions sometimes led to it being considered and described metonymously as two covenants.[32] Ursinus listed precisely the same differences of administration as those found in Calvin. One was the special place given to corporal benefits in the Old Testament. The second was in respect to the circumstances of the promise of grace - in the old reconciliation was through the Messiah who was to come, in the new through the Messiah come and exhibited. The third was in the number and nature of the sacraments or signs of the covenant. The fourth was the comparative obscurity of the old shrouded in types and figures, compared with the clarity of the new. Fifthly, in the old the church was bound to the entire Mosaical law, moral, ceremonial and civil, whereas in the new only the moral law and the sacraments were binding. Finally, in the old the Church was restricted largely to one nation, while in the new it was 'catholick and universal'.[33]

Ursinus again stressed the unity and continuity of the covenant in his treatment of the sacraments, which were 'signes of the eternall covenant betweene God and men'. The substance or the thing signified was the same in both eras. The Old Testament fathers received the same spiritual benefits and ate of the same spiritual food as the New Testament believers. The same basic differences were again outlined.[34] Ursinus' writings in connection with the eucharistic controversy, especially his *Davidis Chytraei commonefactio de controversia eucharistica* and the *Defensio Argumentorum aliquot, ab orthodoxis contra*

ubiquitatem corporis Christi, had a particularly strong emphasis on the unity and diversity of the covenant,[35] as also had his work *Anabaptistici Dogmatis*.[36]

Law and Gospel

The major thrust of Ursinus' covenantal theology was in explaining the relationship of the law and the gospel. Although he always dealt with this relationship in the ever-present section on the law of God in all his systematic works, he discussed it specifically in the *Explicationes* under the rubric of the gospel after posing the transitional question (taking him from the section on the covenant to that on the gospel) as to why the old covenant was taken for law, and the new for gospel.[37]

Ursinus said that the 'Law and Gospel doe comprehend one thing'. Christ was not opposed to the law; rather he was its true interpreter who showed that the law required a righteousness other than that which the Pharisees thought about. [38] The unifying factor in the law and the gospel was God's covenant: 'In the olde Testament God himselfe in briefe wise delivered the doctrine of the Law and the Gospel, the Decalogue and the promises, as when he saith, *Walke before mee; and bee thou perfect*'.[39]

By the Old and New Testament together, Ursinus claimed, 'is meant the covenant. If then the covenant which is between God and the faithful bee described in these books, it must needs be, that in these is declared what God promiseth, and what he doth unto us, to wit, his favour, remission of sins, his Holy Spirit, righteousness, and life everlasting, and preservation of his church in this life, by and for his sonne our Mediatour: as also what he requireth of us, that is to say, faith, by the which we receave his benefits: and a life framed according to his commandements, by which we declare our thankfulness. And these are the things which are taught in the Law and the Gospell'.[40] But in respect of administration, law and

gospel could be conceived as two covenants, and the basic difference was that 'the law promiseth freely after one maner, and the gospel after another. The law promiseth freely with a condition of our obedience, but the gospel promiseth freely, without the works of the Lawe, with a condition of faith, not with a condition of our obedience'.[41]

Ursinus affirmed the traditional three-fold division of the law, moral, ceremonial and judicial.[42] The ceremonial and judicial, commanding external obedience, were binding only on the Jews.[43] In the moral law, which required both internal and external obedience, 'the nature and righteousness of God is expressed, the image of God doth shew, whereunto man was created'. Therefore this was eternal and unchanging and was not 'in like manner abrogated' at the coming of Christ.[44] It was abrogated for believers as touching justification (since the Mediator had dealt with the curse which its violation had imposed), but not with respect to sanctification: 'The moral law is abrogated in respect of the curse, not in respect of obedience due to it'.[45] Justification came through faith alone.

In this discussion, Ursinus distinguished between obedience as a condition distinct from faith (as above n.39), and obedience as a condition arising from saving faith, when he went on to say, 'with this condition of faith is ioined by an indissoluble knotte and bond the condition of newe obedience'. Faith always called men to a new obedience, which was true, voluntary and spiritual.[46] And the moral law was the rule of this new obedience. The function of the moral law was affected by the fall. In the time of innocency it served as a guide for the 'perfect conforming of the life of man to God's will'. Since the fall, it was necessary for discipline in a fallen society and served to expose sin and to convince men of their misery, directing them to Christ for salvation. But it

was still relevant in the lives of the regenerate in a number of areas. Being an expression of the will of God it continued to have its original function in urging the conformity of the whole man to that will. It continued to expose sin which remained in the regenerate and lead them to Christ for renewal. Again, it helped to preserve discipline in the church and society, and provided direction as to the nature of the true service and worship of God.[47]

Because of the eternal nature of the law as an expression of God's character and will, it was something which was operative long before it was verbalized to Moses. It was an expression of the natural law which bound men since creation. Natural law was no different from moral law in uncorrupted nature.[48] Here lay another of the differences between law and gospel. The law was originally made known by the light of nature (it was the corruption of nature that necessitated a further revelation of it), whereas 'the gospell is knowen by the light of grace onlie'.[49] The purpose of the gospel was to deal with the sin, curse and death which were the consequence of disobedience to God's law and which separated men from God and his will. Through the Mediator of the covenant, the gospel provided satisfaction for the broken law, and then it 'sendeth us back unto the law, which in particular and distinctly declareth, what that righteousnes, or obedience, or works are, which God requireth of us'.[50]

It is his explanation of natural law in relation to moral law and his relating of this to the created order that has led to Ursinus being acclaimed the originator of federal theology. But the equating of the moral law with the natural law in creation was something which his Reformed colleagues and predecessors in Switzerland had already done. There is nothing in Ursinus' use of natural law in this context which he could not have learned from Calvin. Certainly, he is to be credited with coining the

terms *foedus creationis* and *foedus naturale* in speaking of the Edenic relationship of unfallen man with God, but evidence has been produced to show that Calvin had already viewed this relationship in terms of a covenant. Ursinus in his *Summa theologiae* merely enlarged upon and defined more clearly something that was already present in Reformed theology.

Undoubtedly, Ursinus during his time in Wittemberg was well instructed in Melanchthon's natural law theology as set out in his *Loci Communes*, and which equated the law of nature with the *imago Dei* in man and with the later verbalized revelation to Moses.[51] But to say that this development was 'unparalleled by other reformers' and 'can be explained solely by Melanchthon', does not take account of all the evidence.[52] There are three areas where Ursinus was said to have incorporated the Swiss covenantal tradition within a Melanchthonian structure.[53] The first was that already mentioned, the use of natural law. Calvin was said to be unconcerned about the law of nature, and that when he spoke of a *foedus legale* he was only thinking in terms of the Mosaic administration and not of the created order, and therefore it could not be used in the sense of a *foedus creationis*.[54] But the fact remains that Calvin clearly identified the law of nature with the image of God and the *lex moralis* contained in the decalogue,[55] and that he used the term 'covenant' in relation to man when he was under the law of nature in Eden.[56] Lillback was correct in saying that 'Melanchthon did not have a monopoly upon the concept of natural law', and that Ursinus' use of the concept was in identical terms as found with Calvin and Melanchthon', or Luther for that matter.[57]

The second suggested area of Melanchthon's influence was that of the law/gospel dichotomy. Melanchthon's influence was said to be at work in Ursinus' proposition that the whole doctrine of true Christianity was

comprehended in the law and the gospel, and that the difference was that one was known to all by nature and the other only to believers through grace. Calvin's covenantal thought was considered to be obscure on this issue, and that it was Ursinus' equation of the revealed law with the natural law that clarified the distinctions.[58] But this is hardly the picture which emerged from this research in Calvin. Calvin was meticulous in his insistence upon the unity of the covenants, and also in his statements concerning their differences in terms of law and gospel.[59]

Ursinus followed the same understanding. He began from the basis that consolation in life and death could only come through the great and gracious mercy of God in his covenant of grace - a covenant of reconciliation effected by his Spirit in the hearts of his people, producing filial obedience.[60] This, for Ursinus, was the substance of the true Christianity made known in the law and the gospel. 'What does the law teach?' he then asked. His answer was 'Just what God enjoined in the covenant of creation with man', and he went on to describe this as being related to God by a covenant of life (*pacto vitæ*) under conditions which God imposed.[61]

A little further on when showing the differences between the law and the gospel, Ursinus said, 'The law contains the covenant of nature, which was made by God with man in creation'. This covenant was known by the light of nature and required perfect obedience, to which God promised eternal life.[62] When man failed to bring what was required in this covenant of nature, God made with him a new 'covenant of grace containing the true gospel', which cannot be known by nature. This covenant held out to men the righteousness which the law required. That righteousness was completely satisfied in Christ and was restored in men by the Spirit of Christ. Through Christ this covenant promised eternal life graciously to those who

believed in him.[63] It cannot be said at this point that Calvin's thought militated against the concept of a covenant of works, while that of Ursinus led to it. There was a clear parallel in their understanding of unity and diversity in the law and the gospel.

The third area claiming to show Melanchthonian influence was in Melanchthon's concept of baptism as a covenant. This was supposed to contribute to the development of Ursinus' *foedus creationis*. But how the idea of covenantal baptism could be singled out as attributable to Melanchthon is difficult to understand. Oecolampadius, Zwingli and Bullinger all developed the idea. Nor was the connection absent in Luther. And Calvin's covenantal thought was seen to receive its stimulus from this link. There was nothing in Melanchthon's view that was unique in this area. Covenantal baptism was the common property of Reformed theology, and Ursinus continued the tradition in his treatment of the sacraments. Furthermore it cannot be proved that this contributed any more to his designation of the created order as a *foedus creationis* than any other aspect of his covenantal thought.

Like Calvin, Ursinus understood the work of Christ in the gospel as essentially law-work. This arose from the position of man *pre lapsus*, and the nature and consequences of the fall. Man was created perfect (though not equal with God), and he knew sufficient to 'performe that conformitie which God exacted of him', namely, to conform to the will of God, in knowing, praising, worshipping and obeying the Creator; in short, 'to love God and neighbour'.[64] The motivation for this conformity which reflected the image of God in man was a contemplation of God's works both in himself and in the other creatures, and also a consideration of 'the infinite goodnes, wisdom, power, iustice, bounty and maiestie of God'. By this means man was stirred and enabled to worship God aright 'in whole

obedience, according to his divine law'.[65] Law in Eden was therefore to be seen in the context of divine goodness and of God's gracious provision for Adam's continuity in life.

Adam's sin was therefore a violation of God's will or law. 'Sinne is a trangression of the lawe, or, whatsoever is repugnant to the law', was how Ursinus defined sin. And original sin he described as 'a wanting of that original righteousness what ought to be in us'.[66] Adam's disobedience involved all humanity in his guilt and corrupted human nature. 'Christ, the other Adam', came to rectify this double evil which had befallen men in Adam, by 'a double grace...even imputation of righteousness and regeneration'.[67] Man could no longer satisfy the justice of God as taught in the covenant of the law. That justice required everlasting death which had been threatened for the trangression of the law.[68] Deliverance could only come from God himself.

Because of man's condition *post lapsus* there could be no covenant now between God and man without a Mediator, 'for without the satisfaction and the death of the Mediator, there could be no reconcilement, or any receiving into favour'.[69] God in his sovereign mercy, therefore, gave to Adam the promise of deliverance through the covenant of grace.[70] This required inflicting the punishment for the violation of the law upon his Son in performance of full satisfaction. In Christ perfect deliverance was promised for all that was 'perfectly lost' in Adam. 'Christ's satisfaction for our sins, which is imputed to us, is a most perfect conformity and correspondence with the Law of God'.[71] There was therefore no basic contradiction between the means of satisfaction under the law and the gospel since Christ fulfilled the conditions of the law or of the *foedus creationis*. The difference was merely in who made the

satisfaction. Man could no longer make it. Christ must make it for him.[72]

Mutuality and Conditionality

Ursinus took great pains in his definitions of a covenant. His one-word definition was 'reconciliation'. 'Reconciliation in scripture,' he said, 'is termed the Covenaunt and testament'. This was because the doctrine of the covenant between God and man always had respect to a mediator, and a mediator is 'a reconciler of parties who are at enemitie'.[73] For Ursinus, therefore, 'the name of covenant and Testament shew the same thing to wit, our reconcilement with God'.

Reconciliation was called a 'covenant' because God had promised to perform certain things to his people and they in turn promised certain things unto God, with added signs and pledges of agreement. It was also called a 'testament' because reconciliation was made by the death of the Mediator, who thereby purchased, confirmed and ratified it with God by his blood, disposing to his people such things as 'he woulde have done concerning them'.[74] The interchangable use of *testamentum*, *foedus* and *pactum* is obvious and deliberate throughout Ursinus' works. He frequently drew specific attention to it, as in *David Chytraeus*: 'Novum Testamentum seu foedus (id enim hic significat Testamentum)...'[75]

Ursinus' general definition of a covenant was: 'a mutuall promise or agreement betweene the parties who are ioined...whereby is made a bond or obligation for the performance of certaine things on both parts, solemne ceremonies and tokens being added thereto, to testifie and confirme that promise and agreement'.[76] It was to this kind of a covenant made between men that God accommodated himself in reconciling his people again, except that this was not between equals and required an acceptable Mediator.

Ursinus then proceeded to a special definition of the

covenant between God and men as: '*a mutuall promise and agreement, made by our Mediatour, confirmed by othes and solemne tokens (which we call Sacramentes) whereby God bindeth himselfe to remitte their sinnes unto them that beleeve, and to give them everlasting life, for, and by his sonne, our Mediator: and men bind themselves to receive this so great a benefit with true faith and to yeeld true obedience unto God; which is, to live according to his will, that so they may declare their thankfulnesse unto God.* The summe is: *This covenant is God's bond to yeeld us his grace and favour: and of the other side our bond, to receive the grace by faith and to yeelde new obedience*'.[77]

For Ursinus, the covenant was initiated in the divine promise of grace and deliverance, to which God bound himself in Christ, but it also involved a mutual element requring a fulfilment of obligations on the part of those with whom it was made. It was clearly one-sided in its initiation, but two-sided in its application and outworking. This dual emphasis was obvious in some of the passages already quoted in previous sections, and it runs like a refrain through many of his other writings. In the *Rules and Axioms of Certaine Chiefe Points of Christianitie*, proposed for disputation in the *Collegium Sapientiae*, he said, 'The word Covenant doth signifie that in Scripture we are taught that God promiseth or performeth unto menne either before or since the manifestation of *Christ* in the flesh, and what he requireth againe of them, and for what cause'.[78]

It has been argued by those who want to label Ursinus a bilateralist that while the principal element in the covenant may be the promise of God, that this element is nevertheless 'only *part* of the larger whole', which was the mutual, bilateral nature of the covenant in Ursinus' thought.[79] But Ursinus was careful to keep the twin aspects of promise and obligation in view, and in the wider context of his theology it would be more correct to say

that the obligation was only *part* of the larger whole which was the sovereignty of divine grace in the matter of reconciliation. As Karlberg said, Ursinus' 'mutuality is *never* construed in terms of equality of persons'.[80]

The emphasis on the priority of grace was clear from Ursinus' doctrine of faith. Because Ursinus frequently held out the promise of the gospel to those who repent and believe, this has been construed as meaning that the gratuitous character of faith was destroyed, and that faith was something to be viewed purely in anthropomorphic terms, 'within the reach of anyone who wills to have it'.[81] Thus, it was said, faith was divorced from assurance and 'must await the proper fulfilment of the covenant obligations which include obedience, good works and sanctification'.[82]

Ursinus certainly viewed faith as an act and as a condition of the covenant.[83] But the suggestion that it was thereby grounded in the will of man is without foundation. Ursinus defined faith in general as 'a knowledge of certaine propositions, and a firm assent, caused by the autorite of a true witness'.[84] But a theological definition had an added dimension. It was to give a firm assent to the revelation of God's will and works in Scripture, and to yield assent to every word in the law and the gospel.[85] But this *yeilding* assent was not mere mental acquiesence to certain propositions although it included that; it was something beyond the reach and ability of any man. It 'cometh and dependeth of a peculiar and supernaturall revelation or divine Testimony'.[86]

Ursinus listed four kinds of faith, historical, temporary, miracle-working faith, and justifying faith. The first three of these were inadequate for reconciliation. Historical faith, that is, intellectual persausion of the truth written in God's word, was good to have, but then devils also had that. Temporary faith was

to profess Christ for a time and rejoice in his doctrine, which many hypocrites also had. Faith to work miracles was equally good, but hypocrites had it as well.[87] Justifying faith, on the other hand, was not only assent to every word, but a confidence and full persausion concerning the promise of grace for the merit of Christ, and the personal applying of every promise. It was not something communicable to others; only those who had it, knew what it was.[88] This faith had for its end the glory of God and the salvation of men. It was given through the instrumentality of the word of God and the operation of the Holy Spirit, and its sole author and source was God. It was his gift to the elect, and to the elect only, said Ursinus: 'Iustifying faith is only proper to the elect, and that to al of them'.[89]

So when Ursinus spoke of faith as the condition of the covenant to be fulfilled on man's side, it is clear that he was not speaking of an antecedent condition which could be fulfilled by any man who so willed by himself. It was a condition which had been fulfilled in the covenant of grace by Christ for the elect, and was to be exercised in a responsible and meaningful way by the elect in response to the promises of the gospel, and could only be exercised by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. To speak of a decisive shift in 'the locus of faith' to the will of man does not do justice to the full exposition of Ursinus' doctrine of faith.[90]

The same was true of obedience, repentance and good works. Ursinus also referred to 'the condition of new obedience' in the covenant.[91] This was synonomous with repentance after conversion which was also a 'condition annexed', wrought by the Holy Spirit, and not a momentary but a lifelong duty, for 'the whole life of the godly is and must be a certaine continuall repentance and conversion'.[92] But this conditionality did not mean that reception by God or admission to baptism and membership of

the church depended on any outward or inward sanctity which first had to be produced by men. That was entirely 'of the free mercy and covenant, or promise of God'. Good works were inextricably linked to justifying faith since the purpose of reconciliation was to conform men again to the righteousness that was lost in Adam.[93] The good works of the regenerate were therefore 'the tokens, or testimonies of faith, from which they proceed, and which they as effects thereof do shew to be in men'.[94]

While the repentance of the elect was solely from God, it was, however, never perfect in this life. The obedience of believers was always 'maiemed and scarce begunne'. Consequently it could never satisfy God's law, but in spite of its sins and defects, it was nevertheless acceptable to God, because it 'is begun by Faith, *so by Faith it pleaseth God*'.[95] The imputed satisfaction of Christ covered these sins also. This was simply a restatement of Calvin's doctrine of the justification of the works of the regenerate as well as their person. The law was fully and sufficiently paid in Christ for the elect to be received of God into grace and to be endued with the Holy Spirit and renewed in the image of God so that they could 'henceforward obey his law'.[96] Their works might still be sinful, but they differed from those of the wicked because 'faith shineth' on them. They pleased God only in the Mediator.[97] Here again it was manifestly not antecedent conditions of obedience, repentance or good works which Ursinus was suggesting, but an obedience that was the effect of faith and the consequence of divine grace alone.

Ursinus' doctrine of election also demonstrated the priority of grace in his view of the covenant. This was particularly obvious in his explanation of predestination to his friend in *Certaine Learned Discourses*. In the introduction to this work Pareus seemed to indicate that Calvin was a major influence on Ursinus in this respect,

although he listed Luther, Melanchthon, and Zwingli as appreciated by him as well.[98] It was to Calvin he turned for an answer to the problem of the baptism of children and the question of their possible non-election. The covenant was what brought comfort to parents in this respect. The children were 'heires of the covenant, according to that promise *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seede*'; therefore parents could, from the womb, 'plead privilege in the covenant with God, by vertue of the free promise made unto them and their seed after them'. Calvin, he said, 'teacheth that they are the sonnes of wrath in regard of nature; and sonnes of the covenant in respect of grace'.[99]

Ursinus paralleled Calvin's thought on this issue. However, he told his friend he had only 'to read D. Beza and P. Martyr on this question [ie. predestination] whereunto I thinke you were before directed by me'.[100] Ursinus defined predestination as 'the eternall, most iust, and unchangable counsell of God, of creating men, of permitting their fal into sin and eternal death, of sending his sonne in the flesh, that he mighte be a sacrifice, and of converting by the word and Holy Ghost, for the Mediators sake, and saving them in true faith and conversion, and of leaving the rest in sin and eternal death, and raising them up to iudgement, and casting them into eternal paines'.[101]

Unlike Beza, Ursinus always preferred to speak of the *permission* of the fall, but his explication of this definition makes it clear that 'permitted' equalled 'willed' in his thought, since the first cause of reprobation was 'the declaration of God's iustice, serveritie, and hatred against sin in the reprobate', and that evil works were not the cause of reprobation but its effects. God both willed the end of all things, and also willed the means to the end, so that all things depended on his immutable decree.[102] The decreed end and the decreed means reflected the secret will and the revealed will of God.

It was God's revealed will that men were to concentrate upon. The doctrine of predestination was not intended to distract from the revealed will in order to try to explore the secret will. In relation to the revealed will, or second causes, the will of man was not to be idle. Men must believe and 'pray for eternal salvation without condition or doubt'[103], although it was still true that man's will must be 'before moved, acted, inclined, softened and renewed by God through his word'.[104] Pareus summed up Ursinus' position when he said that 'they which believe are said to be ordeined unto life eternall in Christ, not for observing God's order, that is to say, the meanes directing us unto life, but for the eternall decree alone of God, I meane the predestination of the Elect unto salvation...so that Gods ordination is precedent unto faith, and the other subordinate means of salvation...are the effects of this cause'.[105]

Like Calvin, Ursinus distinguished between an outward and an inward election, and here lay the ultimate answer to the problem of those who had received the signs and benefits of the covenant in the church but who later turned away from them. The outward elect were those called to the visible church, but not necessarily to eternal life and 'to the church of the saints, which calling is internal and effectual'.[106] The outward aspects of the covenant were not to be equated with the covenant itself, which was eternal. The signs and seals were correlative to the covenant, not as a covenant *per se*, but only as a covenant confirmed by signs.[107] Baptism as the seal of the covenant could therefore be administered to the infants of the faithful because of the promise to them, but this in itself was no final guarantee of election and of being in the covenant in an eternal sense. But election guaranteed the perpetuity of the covenant in those chosen, which was why baptism as the seal of the covenant was not to be readministered, because 'the covenant once begun with God

remaineth perpetually stedfast to such as repent, even after their sinnes from that time committed'.[106]

On the question as to whom the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection appertained, Ursinus answered unequivocally: 'As often as the Gospell extendeth the fruit of Christ's merits and benefits unto all, it must be understood (as Saint Ambrose) of *the whole number of the faithful and elect*'.[107] The gospel was universally offered to all, since the elect and the reprobate were not generally known, but it was the conditions annexed which identified, as far as they could be, those in covenant. Ursinus taught that the conditions of faith and repentance annexed to the promises of the covenant demonstrated that they did not pertain to all. No one could argue from the promises that 'Christ died for all men; I am a man; therefore Christ died for me'. The conditions of the promise permitted only the premise, 'Christ died for all who believe'. It was only when someone truly believed that they could say assuredly, 'Christ died for me'.[108] And faith, conversion and repentance were only wrought effectually by the Holy Spirit in the elect 'by his speciall favour'.[109] All the elect would be truly converted, and for them perserverance was certain though none could take carnal security from that fact. The reprobate were never truly repentant. Some of these for a time could forsake error, embrace the truth and abstain from external sins, producing a show of holiness, but they were always without the true fear, love or faith of God.[110] They were never in true eternal covenantal relationship with God.

NOTES: Chapter Fourteen

1 Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, 13-22.

2 Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinsim*, 41.

3 Heppe, *Geschichte des deutschen Protestantismus*, 1.139-204. This thesis is developed especially in pp. 139-144.

4 Weir, '*Foedus Naturale*', 41; Toon, *op.cit.*, 21.

5 For biographical details see: J.W. Nevin, 'Zacharius Ursinus', *Mercersburg Review*, 3. (1851), 490-512; K. Sudhoff, *C.Olevianus und Z.Ursinus: Leben und Ansgewählte Shriften*, (Eberfeld, 1857); D. Agnew, 'Zacharius Ursinus', *The Theology of Consolation*, (Edinburgh, 1880), 367-368; J. Ney, 'Ursinus', *NSHE*, 12. 111-112; P. Meinhold, 'Ursinus', *LFK*, 10. 571; M.W. Anderson, 'Ursinus', *NIDCC*, 1005; J.F.A. Gillet, 'Ursinus', *RE*, 16. 754-761; E.K. Sturm, *Der junge Zacharias Ursin*, (Neukirchen, 1972); D. Visser, *Zacharius Ursinus: The Reluctant Reformer*, (New York, 1983); 'Zacharius Ursinus', *Shapers of Religious Traditions* ed. J.Raitt, 121-139.

Related literature, mainly on the Catechism includes J.W. Nevin, *The History and Genius of the Heidelberg Catechism*, (Chambersburg Pa., 1847); H. Harbaugh, *The Fathers of the Reformed Church*, (Philadelphia, 1857-1888); J.I. Good, *The Origins of the Reformed Church in Germany*, (Reading Pa., 1887); *The Heidelberg Catechism in Its Newest Light*, (Philadelphia, 1914; Schaff, *Creeds*, 1.529-554; 3.305-355; G.W. Bethune, *Expository Lectures on the Heidelberg Catechism*, 2 vols. (New York, 1864); M.A. Gooszen, *De Heidelbergsche Catechismus: Textus Receptus met Toelichtende Teksten*, (Leiden, 1890); Barth, *Die Christliche Lehre nach dem Heidelberger Katechismus*, (Zollikon-Zürich, 1948); *The Heidelberg Catechism for Today*, trs. S.C Guthrie, (Richmond, 1964); K. Schilder, *Heidelbergsche Catechismus*, 4 vols. (Goes, 1947-1951); T.W. Richards, *The Heidelberg Catechism: Historical and Doctrinal Studies*, (Philadelphia, 1913); A. Lang, *Der Heidelberger Katechismus und vier verwandte Katechismen*, (Leipzig, 1907); J.H. Bratt, ed. *The Rise and Development of Calvinism*, (Grand Rapids, 1959); B. Thompson, ed. *Essays on the Heidelberg Catechism*, (Philadelphia, 1963); E.J. Masselink, *The Heidelberg Story*, (Grand Rapids, 1964); A.O. Miller and E.O. Osterhaven, et.al. *The Heidelberg Catechism with Commentary*, (Philadelphia, 1963); G.H. Hinkle, 'The Theology of the Ursinus Movement'. PhD Thesis (Yale University, 1964), 8-32; R. Nicole, 'The Doctrine of Definite Atonement in the Heidelberg Catechism', *The Gordon Review*, 3. (1964), 138-145; W. Hollweg, *Neue Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Lehre des Heidelberger Katechismus* (Neukirchen, 1968); J. Tanis, 'The Heidelberg

Catechism in the Hands of the Calvinistic Pietists', *RR*, 24. (1970-1971). 156-161; H. Hoeksema, *The Triple Knowledge*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, 1970-1972).

6 On Ursinus' covenantal theology see: Heppe, *op.cit.*; Kendall, *op.cit.*, 38-41; Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 202-203; Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1. 187-196; 'Foedus Operum', 463-464; Karlberg, 'The Mosaic Covenant',91-95; 'Reformed Interpretation', 17-19; Bierma, 'The Covenant Theology of Casper Olevian', 77-92; Muller, 'Predestination and Christology', 243-314; Lillback, 'Ursinus Development of the Covenant of Creation', *WTJ*, 43. (1981), 247-288; 'The Binding of God', 447-459; Ishbell, 'The Origin of the Concept', 16-24; Weir, '*Foedus Naturale*', 116-136; Visser, 'The Covenant in Zacharius Ursinus', *SCJ*, 18. (1987), 531-544.

7 Baker, *op.cit.*, 202-203; Letham, 'Saving Faith'188, 192, 194. Letham follows Baker here and both fail to even mention Ursinus' time in Geneva or any possible influence by Calvin.

8 Letham, *op.cit.*, 191; Baker, *op.cit.*, 203.

9 For discussion of this problem see Lillback, 'Ursinus Development'.

10 Heppe, *op.cit.*, 139-204.

11 P. Miller was largely responsible for the popularizing of this idea in the English speaking world: *The New England Mind*, 55f; 'The Marrow', 262-263.

12 This idea originally caught on in the German theological schools: Lang, *op.cit.*, lxiv-lxvii; Althaus, *Die Prinzipien*, 146-163; Schrenk, *Gottesreich und Bund*, 48-59; Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte des Protestantismus*, 48-49; Barth, *CD* 4'.54-66 ; Moltmann, 'Foederaltheologie', *LTK*, 4.190-192; Sturm, *op.cit.*, 253-256.

13 Ursinus, *Summa theologicae*, in *Opera theologica*, 3 vols. ed. D. Pareus, Heidelberg 1612, 1.10-33; *Catechesis minor*, in *Opera*, 1.34-39(for 43. irr. pagination).

14 *Explicationes*, in *Opera*, 1.46-413; English trs. by H. Parry, *The Summe of the Christian Religion*, (Oxford, 1591) used in this research. The first edition by Parry was in 1587. A later, but unreliable translation, is G.W. Williard, *The Commentary of Zacharius Ursinus*, (Columbus, 1852). Another brief explanatory work by Ursinus on the *Catechism* is available in translation, *A Collection of Certaine Learned Discourses*, trs. I. H., (Oxford, 1600). This was written to a friend requesting help with some difficult points in the *Catechism*.

15 Weir's, *op.cit.*, 120,128, comparsion of the structure of Ursinus' catechetical works with Beza's *Summa totius* is entirely out of place, as the purpose of these works is

entirely different. It would have been more appropriate to compare Beza's *Confessio fidei*.

16 Ursinus, *The Summe*, 1-55.

17 *Ibid.*, 56-195.

18 *Ibid.*, 196-749.

19 *Ibid.*, 750-965.

20 *Opera*, 1.426-753.

21 *The Summe*, 10ff.

22 Muller, *op.cit.*, 244.

23 Ursinus, *The Summe*, 56ff; Beza, *Quest.and Ans.*, 40bff.

24 *Organi Aristotelei, libre quinque priores, per quaestiones perspicue et erudite expositi...De Petri Ramus dialectica et rhetorica iudicium*, (Neustadt, 1586); *Scholasticarum in materiis theologicis exercitationum liber*, (Neustadt, 1589).

25 Moltmann, 'Zur bedeutung des Petrus Ramus für philosphie und theologie in Calvinismus', *ZKG*, 68, 1957, 295-318; cf. Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, 21.

26 Williard, ed. *The Commentary*, 72,119,155,183(two tables),479,502,528,563,589. Yet Ong, *The Inventory*, 531, lists Ursinus as an anti-Ramist. On the other hand, Letham, 'Foedus Operum' 465, also overstates the case by describing Heidelberg as one of 'the major centers of Ramism'.

27 Muller, *op.cit.*, 252-253.

28 *Ibid.*, 254-291.

29 Ursinus, *The Summe*, 241; *Opera*, 1.427-428.

30 *Ibid.*

31 *Ibid.*, 142-143,246-248.

32 *Ibid.*, 242.

33 *Ibid.*, 243-244; *Summa Theol.*, 14.

34 *Learned Discourses*, 272,282; *The Summe*, 648-649; cf. on baptism 670-674; also *Responsio ad calumnias...theologus catechesus* (1563), in *Opera*, 2. 12,13; cf. 1.761-765.

35 *Davidis Chytraei*, in *Opera*, 2. 1148, 1203-1204, 1207-1208, 1211-1212, 1217, 1220-1221, 1250; *Defensio Argumentorum* in *Opera* 2. 1608-1609, 1613; cf. *Ad Ioh. Marbachii...et Ioachimi Morlini*, in *Opera*, 2. 1520; *Libellus brevis de coena Domini editus a M. Nicolao Selneccero*, in *Opera*, 2. 1471-1472; *De sacramentis thesis thelogicae...a Luca Bacmeistero*, in *Opera*, 2.1520.

36 *Anabaptistici dogmatis, quod sacramenta sint tantum signa professionis*, in *Opera*, 2. 1669-1670.

37 *The Summe*, 244.

38 *Ibid.*, 6; cf. *Learned Discourses*, 206-207, 83; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 1.332-333; Beza, *infra*, 2.73.

39 *Ibid.*, 3.

40 *Ibid.*, 7.

41 *Ibid*, 780.

42 *Ibid.*, 780f; *Learned Discourses*, 258-259.

43 *Ibid.*, 784, 796-797.

44 *Ibid.*, 782;783-784,798; cf. *Learned Discourses*, 220,259.

45 *Ibid.*, 795; *Learned Discourses*, 260, 272; *Opera*, 1.667-671, 759-760.

46 *Ibid.*, 795, 799.

47 *Learned Discourses*, 361; *The Summe*, 788-792; cf. 52-54; *Opera*, 1.674-678.

48 *Ibid.*, 783,785; *Opera*, 1.758-759; *Learned Discourses*, 258, 'The natural law before the fal was altogether the same with the moral law of God'.

49 *Ibid.*, 249ff.

50 *Ibid.*, 251-253.

51 Melanchthon, *Loci Communes* (1521,1535), *CR*, 21.23-28, 116-120, 687-688; *Commentarii in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos* (1532), *CR*, 15.562-579, 631-634; *Philosophiae Moralis Epitomes* (1538), *CR*, 16.23-30, 62-78; cf. *Annotationes in Evangelium Matthaei* (1523), *CR*, 14.581-586; *Ennarationes aliquot librorum Ethicorum Aristotelis* (1529), *CR*, 16.278-310; *Explicatio Symboli Niceni* (1550), *CR*, 23.547-555; *Examen Ordinandorum* (1554), *CR*, 23.8-11. For a discussion of Melanchthon's view of natural law in relation to the other reformers, see J.T. McNeill, 'Natural Law in the Teaching of the Reformers', *Journal of Religion* 26. (1946), 172-175.

52 Lang, *op.cit.*, lxv.

53 Lillback, 'Ursinus Development', 254f is followed here.

54 Lang, *op.cit.*, lxv; Sturm, *op.cit.*, 256.

55 Calvin, *Inst.*, II.8.1; IV.20.16; *Har.of Pent.*, 3.196-197; *Com.on Ps.*, 119:52; *Com.on John*, 3:6; *Com.on Rom.*, 2:14-15.

56 *Inst.*, IV.19.2; see *infra*, 1.345, 349, 351.

57 Lillback, *op.cit.*, 261,262.

58 Althaus, *op.cit.*, 153-156.

59 Calvin, *Inst.*, II.10.1-23; II.11.1-14.

60 *Summa Theol.*, 10, 'ex immensa et gratuita misericordia me recipit in foedus gratiae suae...arque hoc foedus suum in corda meo per Spiritum suum, ad imaginem Dei me reformantem et clamantem in me Abba Pater, et per verbum suum et signa huius foederis visibilis obsignavit.'

61 *Ibid.*, 10, 'Quale in creatione foedus cum homine Deus iniverit: quo pacto se homo in eo servando gesserit: et quid ab ipso Deus post initum cum eo novum foedus gratiae, requirat: hoc est, qualis et ad quid conditus sit homo a Deo, in quem statum sit redactus: et quo pacto vitam suam Deo reconciliatus debeat instituere.'

62 *Ibid, 14, 'Lex continet foedus naturale, in creatione a Deo cum hominibus initum, hoc est, natura hominibus nota est; et requirit a nobis perfectam obedientiam erga Deum, et praestantibus eam, promittit vitam aeternam, non praestantibus minatur aeternal poenas.'*

63 Ibid, 14, 'Evangelium vero continet foedus gratiae, hoc est minime natura notum existens: ostendit nobis eius iustitiae, quam Lex requirit, impletionem in Christo, et restitutionem in nobis per Christi Spiritum, et promittit vitam aeternam gratis propter Christum, his qui eum credunt.'

64 *The Summe*, 121-122.

65 *Ibid.*, 123.

66 *Ibid.*, 63, 66; cf. *Learned Discourses*, 227. See also the *Shorter Catechism*, Q. 14 and Q. 18.

67 *Ibid.*, 66.

68 *Ibid.*, 217.

69 *Ibid.*, 241; cf. 225-239; *Opera*, 1.744-753.

70 *Ibid.*, 217.

71 *Ibid.*, 217-218,220.

72 *Ibid.*, 222-224,625ff.

73 *Ibid.*, 239.

74 *Ibid.*, 240.

75 *Opera Theol.*, 2.1208; cf. 2.13, 1148, 1204, 1211, 1217, 1471-1472, 1669.

76 *The Summe*, 239-240; cf. *Opera*, 1.427-428.

77 *Ibid.*, 240; cf. *Summa Theol.*, 11; *Defensio Argumentorum*, in *Opera Theol.*, 2. 1608; *Learned Discourses*, 273-274.

78 *Learned Discourses*, 206; cf. *Opera Theol.*, 2.1608-1609, 1613, 1669-1670.

79 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1. 193.

80 Karlberg, 'Reformed Interpretation', 17; 'The Mosaic Covenant', 92.

81 Letham, *op.cit.*, 1. 194; 188-190.

82 *Ibid.*, 193.

83 Ursinus, *The Summe*, 7, 795; *Learned Discourses*, 147, 211-212.

84 *Ibid.*, 255.

85 *Ibid.*

86 *Ibid.*, 256.

87 *Ibid.*, 256-259; *Learned Discourses*, 235; *Opera*, 1.755-756.

88 *Ibid.*, 259-262.

89 *Ibid.*, 265; *Learned Discourses*, 235, 238.

90 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.193.

91 Ursinus, *The Summe*, 7, 795, 799; *Learned Discourses*, 249-250.

92 *Learned Discourses*, 134, 147-148, 211-212, 249-250, 253.

93 *The Summe*, 133, 630-631; *Learned Discourses*, 239, 'True conversion and beginning of new obedience according to all the commandements cannot go before justifying faith and cannot but accompanie it.'

94 *Ibid.*, 175, 768-769.

95 *Ibid.*, 177.

96 *Ibid.*, 221-222.

97 *Ibid.*, 93-95.

98 *Learned Discourses*, 5.

99 *Ibid.*, 20; cf. 24.

100 *Ibid.*, 92-93.

101 *The Summe*, 592; cf. *Learned Discourses*, 94-95.

102 *Ibid.*, 593; *Learned Discourses*, 107-108, 220.

103 *Learned Discourses*, 111, 108; cf. 220; *The Summe*, 143ff.

104 *Ibid.*, 113-115.

105 *Ibid.*, 56.

106 *Ibid.*, 122; *The Summe*, 596-598; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 2.26-30; Beza, *infra*, 2.69-70.

107 *Ibid.*, 286-287.

108 *Ibid.*, 295-296; *The Summe*, 595-596.

109 *Ibid.*, 134f; cf. 119f.

110 *Ibid.*, 149.

111 *Ibid.*, 235.

112 *Ibid.*, 255.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

The Heidelberg Story: Casper Olevianus

Olevianus was born in Trèves (Trier) in 1536, and after his childhood education, he engaged in legal studies from 1550-1558 at Paris, Orleans and Bourges. Interest in the Scriptures was awakened early in his life by reading 'a certaine excellent learned man'. He was taught about Christ at school, but the teaching was bound up with 'the multitude of mens traditions', until the Holy Spirit later nourished these sparks.[1] When fully persuaded of the truth of the Reformed faith, he became an ardent devotee of its dissemination. He spent some time studying at Geneva under Calvin and also visited Zurich and Lausanne associating with Bullinger and Farel.

In 1559, Olevianus returned to teach in Trèves and, with encouragement from Calvin and Farel, to engage in the work of reforming the church in his home town. The success he had with the citizenry was curbed by opposition from the authorities and he was imprisoned for his forthright preaching. Release came through the influence of Frederick III, who invited him to Heidelberg in 1561 as director of the *Collegium Sapientiae*, and, in veiw of his outstanding gifts of ministry, to pastor the Church of St. Peter's. With Ursinus, he was deposed during the Lutheran reaction under Louis VI. He moved to Berleberg and Wittgenstein, then to Herborn, Nassau in 1584, where he laboured as a pastor and teacher until his death in 1587.[2]

Much in favour with the Elector, Olevianus was a more public figure than the studious Ursinus, and has been described as 'the court preacher'.[3] He was much more straightforward and less complex in his thought than Ursinus, but his academic capabilities, and especially his theological contributions, are not to be underrated. It

is generally accepted that he co-authored the *Heidelberg Catechism*, but the degree of his involvement has been the subject of debate.[4] His lectures on several of the Pauline epistles, Romans, Galatians, Philippians and Colossians, were highly commended and published as commentaries by Beza in Geneva.[5] His more systematic works include the *Expositio Symboli Apostolici* (1576), which is of immediate interest for the way in which Olevianus interpreted the Creed in terms of the covenant.[6]

Another major work by Olevianus, *De substantia foederis gratuiti inter Deum et electos* (1585), published posthumously, was similarly structured. This was probably a collection of earlier writings, *Vester Grund* (c.1563), *Bauernkatechismus* (n.d.), some sermons and a treatise on the sacraments.[7] This was the second treatise, after Bullinger's *De Testamento*, to give titular significance to the covenant. A third work, also on the covenant, *Der Gnadenbund Gottes* (1590), has sometimes been mistaken for a German translation of *De substantia*, but as Bierma said, 'It stands in no textual relation to Olevian's other writings or to the Heidelberg Catechism'.[8]

As with Ursinus, many historians of theology have paused to comment on the significance of Olevianus in the development of federal theology,[9] but in the case of the latter, research is greatly aided by the bonus of Bierma's recent thesis on the subject.[10] The search for the sources of Olevianus' covenantal theology has produced various answers. Some have attributed it to Bullinger, some to Ursinus, some to Calvin, and some to a mixture of these.[11] Like Ursinus, Olevianus' work has been interpreted by some writers as part of a Heidelberg reaction against the rigid, supralapsarian predestination of Geneva.[12] He was also said to have contributed to the Ramist opposition against Bezean Aristotelianism and scholasticism.[13] On the other hand he has been considered as a thorough-going Calvinist, 'in clear agreement with

Beza', and that his importance lay in the fact that he was the first Calvinistic covenantal theologian, and the one who 'tied election and the covenant into an inextricable knot'.[14] His concept of the covenant was further categorized as 'the Calvinistic notion of unilateral testament', resting on absolute election, as distinct from bilateral covenant.[15] He was said to have enlarged on 'the gratuitous and unconditional nature of the essence of the covenant', and that he had 'a very different conception of the covenant from Ursinus', that he eschewed the conditional formulation of Bullinger as followed by Ursinus, so that the covenant 'is fulfilled *for us* not by us. Our part is not that of an equal partner performing mutual or reciprocal duties'.[16]

The questionable nature of this kind of comparison should already be apparent. It has been shown that when Ursinus, (or Bullinger for that matter), spoke of covenant conditions being performed by men he was not speaking of something that unaided man was capable of, but rather of conditions that could only be fulfilled by men through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit and because they had first been fulfilled for them in the covenant of grace itself.[17] Nor has any writer on the covenant, so far considered, who has spoken of the performance of mutual or reciprocal duties, presumed to think of the covenantal relationship or obligations in terms of equal partnership. That is an inference being foisted upon them. It remains, however, for these and the other assertions above to be tested by the evidence from Olevianus' own writings, but this need not be exceedingly detailed here, as Bierma's excellent thesis has already concluded 'that there were no substantial differences in the way the covenant was understood in the Zurich-Rhineland and the Genevan theological traditions'.[18]

Ursinus had incorporated an exposition of the Creed into his *Explicationes*, but while that was related to the

section on the covenant which almost immediately preceded it, it nevertheless remained distinct from it. Olevianus, on the other hand, deliberately set out to expound the Creed in terms of the covenant. This he developed from his definition of the kingdom of Christ as the 'administration of salvation', and therefore the administration of the new covenant.[19]

For Olevianus, the citizens of the kingdom of God were 'God's confederates'. To them the twin benefits of the kingdom and covenant pertained, namely, 'forgiveness of sinnes, and a lot amongst the sanctified who daily studie (Christ exhorting them) to bring forth the worthy fruites of repentance'.[20] Just as there were articles or heads in covenants between men in earthly kingdoms, so in God's kingdom there were certain articles which comprised the foundation of reconciliation. The articles of faith in the Creed, as a kind of manifesto of the kingdom, 'containe the summe and as it were the heads of that covenant'.[21]

The heads of the covenant Olevianus identified in the primary four-fold division of the Creed: God the Father was 'the first fountaine of the covenant, or reconciliation' having chosen his people in Christ before the foundation of the world; God the Son was the ratifier of the covenant, in whom was 'comprehended the whole sum of the covenant'; the Holy Spirit applied the Father's mercy and the Son's redemption 'by engraffing us through faith in Christ', to make us God's confederates; and the church was those 'with whom God had stricken his covenant', and who enjoy all the effects of reconciliation and faith.[22] Here Olevianus endeavoured to present what Ursinus had already declared, that the entire revelation of divine truth was comprehended under the covenant. Where Ursinus had said this in terms of the Old and New Testaments, Olevianus did so in terms of the summary of Christian doctrine in the Apostles' Creed.

Unity and Diversity

For Olevianus there was one eternal covenant of grace for the reconciliation of the faithful in all ages. Christ was the one Mediator of the covenant. Under the old economy attention was focused on the Redeemer to come; under the new, on the full revelation of his person and work.[23] 'The same favour of iustification in Christ,' he said, 'is common to all under the olde and newe Testaments'.[24] The Old Testament fathers, including Adam, Abel Abraham and David, were all reconciled to God by the appropriation of Christ's righteousness by faith, and united with Christ by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit in precisely the same way as New Testament believers: 'That same everlasting covenant that God hath stricken with Abraham, the Sonne of God in man's nature taken of the seede of Abraham hath confirmed, by satisfying the righteousness of God perfectly... Now it resteth that the Holie Ghost engraffe us into Christ through faith the true seed of Abraham, and so poure out that blessing, promised to Abraham and his seede upon us, and by the earnest of an everlasting inheritance'.[25] Adam's sin was taken by Christ, just as much as the sins of believers after Christ.[26]

The differences between the Testaments, although described as old and new covenants were solely in matters of administration and not substance. In addition to the chronological view of Christ, the old dispensation was more dim and obscure. Christ's work was shadowed in the types and figures of sacrifices, historical events and ceremonies, whereas in the new the clear light shone.[27] Also with the more abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the new era, there was a much greater realization of the grace of redemption and the enjoyment of its benefits in faith and fellowship in union with Christ.[28] Furthermore the New Testament believers were no longer burdened with the obligation of obedience to the plethora of ceremonial

laws and regulations which their Old Testament counterparts had been required to observe. These were fulfilled and done away in Christ.[29]

The sacraments also, in the teaching of Olevianus, declared both the unity and diversity, or the substance and the administrative differences, of the covenant in Scripture. The signs or seals of the covenant were God's appointed means of entering into visible covenantal relationship with his people in the church: 'He entereth into league and fellowship with the Church by the ministrie of the word and sacramentes'.[30] The same promise, the same conditions, and the same benefits were signified by the sacraments in both Testaments. They all pointed to the same substance and reality, which was Christ, from whom believers received their spiritual nourishment by faith and continued to partake of the double benefits of the covenant.[31]

The differences between the signs of the Old Testament and the New were that circumcision and the passover had more respect to what was to be fulfilled, and also had respect to the legal and ceremonial aspects of the covenant, which were designed to instruct in the nature of Christ's work to come, but were fulfilled and abolished once the Mediator was made manifest.[32] The symbols of washing with water and partaking of food and drink were now more appropriate for setting forth the cleansing from sin and the nourishing and strengthening of the covenant relationship in Christ.[33] Olevianus' interchangeable use of terms is worth noting in this context, when on the same page he could speak of *signum foederis* and *signum testamenti*.[34]

Law and Gospel

Olevianus, like his Reformed colleagues, thought of the law of God in relation to the divine character and will. The law was the testimony of what the Lord

willed.[35] He described it as 'the immutable rule of righteousness in the divine mind', which required perfect internal and external conformity from all rational creatures.[36] Adam in creation was not exempt from conformity to this *lex naturale*. It was 'a conformity that God required by right of creation'.[37] And this conformity Olevianus termed the *foedus naturale* between God and man, which promised life upon the condition of perfect obedience and threatened death for violation.[38] Conformity to the natural law he equated with the *imago Dei* in which the reason, will, affections, and all the faculties and actions shone with the likeness of God.[39] By nature the knowledge of God's holiness and righteousness was imprinted on the mind of man, so that he was continually aware of his natural obligation to conform: 'All men had the knowledge of God natually engraffe in them, and the worke of the lawe by nature written in their hearts'.[40]

Olevianus also used the term *foedus creationis* to describe man's position and condition *pre lapsus*.[41] It was from that *primum foedus* that Satan lured Adam and Eve in Eden, with the promise of equality with God, thus causing man to violate the covenant of creation with God, and place himself under a *nefarium foedus* with Satan.[42] This covenant with Satan (*foedus Sathanae*) was depicted by Olevianus as the corresponding negative of the covenant of grace. It was a bond or union with the devil into which man had entered through faith in Satan's promise.[43] As a result his nature came under Satan's rule and he became a citizen of the kingdom of darkness, and began to reflect the image of his new master - a situation which needed to be reversed if man was to be delivered.[44]

Adam's disobedience in violating the law of nature and the *foedus creationis*, bound man to punishment and separation from God, and to a condition in which he could never again enjoy such a relationship with God on the basis

of his own integrity. This did not mean, however, that the requirements of the natural law, or the covenantal obligations ceased. Obedience was still owed to God as a creational duty even though man was incapable of rendering such as a fallen creature.[45] The light of the *lex naturae* was no longer an adequate guide because of the corruption of man's nature. Like Calvin, Olevianus used some strong words in this connection, such as 'obliterated' and 'extinguished', but by this he did not mean that it was completely destroyed.[46] The light of nature could still provide some sparks of the knowledge of God and of his attitude to sin, but it was so enveloped in the kingdom of darkness, that its effects were hopelessly impeded and weakened.[47] All excuses men might have, however, with regard to the impaired knowledge of God by nature, were effectively removed when the same requirements of the *foedus naturale* were further brought to impinge upon his conscience by their inscription on the two tables of stone at Sinai. There again was declared 'the unchangeable will of God, whereby he will not onely that all men be conformed to the lawe of nature but to the law written'.[48]

Olevianus was not saying that the restatement of the obligations of the *foedus creationis* in a *foedus legale* at Sinai was to provide a means of justification. He made it clear that while the law promised life for perfect obedience, it could not provide righteousness for those who had broken it.[49] The function of the *foedus legale* was to serve the new covenant, the *foedus gratiae*. Its work was to expose, accuse and condemn in order to prepare the sinner for the gospel and drive him to Christ for help and to take hold of the promises of the covenant of grace.[50] Ultimately there could be no contradiction between the law and the gospel, since the purpose of the one was to work for the other.[51] And most important of all the requirements of the one were fulfilled in the other.

The person and work of Christ occupied a principal

place in Olevianus' writings. In Christ was 'comprehended the whole summe of the covenant'.[52] Only Christ as the God/Man could overthrow Satan's dominion, and defend and maintain the covenant of God against its enemies.[53] The Mediator had to be 'very man' for three reasons: to declare the unchanging righteousness of God, because God would never make a covenant in unrighteousness; to effect reconciliation by death, since God's pronouncement against sin was immutable; and to be 'brotherlie affected towards us'[54] He also had to be 'very God', in order to declare the *infinite* love of God; to be able to perform perfect obedience for others; to overcome sin, wrath and death in himself; and to provide restoration to the image of God.[55] The everlasting nature of the covenant of salvation, therefore, required the everlasting union of Christ's two natures and it was essential that 'the trueth of either nature remain for ever with their properties, and that neither be swallowed up of the other, unless we would have the covenant to be weakened and plucked up from the very foundations'.[56]

Christ's work as Mediator of the covenant was to fulfil the righteousness of God's eternal law, and to make satisfaction for the violation of that law by man. This work, Christ, as the eternal Guarantor (*sponsor*), bound or obligated himself to the Father to perform on behalf of the elect in order to redeem and save them.[57] Olevianus did not apply the word 'covenant' to what was clearly a pretemporal arrangement between the Father and Son. It was seen rather as part of the one eternal covenant of grace with the elect. But the nature of the interaction depicted by Olevianus between the eternal intention and decree of the Father to redeem the elect, and the enlisting and undertaking of the Son to carry through the work which was laid upon him, had all the ingredients of what was later termed the covenant of redemption.[58] It was only through the performance of this work in the life and death

of Christ that the elect could be justified. He met all the requirements of divine righteousness so that the elect could have both

'1. *Quid Lex promittat, et qua conditione.*

2. *Quid Evangelium promittat, et qua conditione'.*[59]

Like Ursinus, Olevianus saw the covenant as synonymous with reconciliation. This was the aim of Christ's work in all his offices: as prophet he informed and instructed men about the covenant and the full reconciliation therein; as priest he paid the very price of reconciliation 'whereby the Mediator of God's righteousness doeth perfectly satisfie for our sinnes, which he did let and keepe the covenant'; and as king he maintained that covenant reconciliation as he 'enricheth and defendeth his faithful and confederate ones'.[60]

Again, in the emphasis on reconciliation, the correspondence between Christ's work and what Adam lost was made clear by Olevianus. The federal implication was unmistakeable when he portrayed Adam as the representative of his posterity, who by continued obedience to the law of God would have gained for them the favour and image of God and all the spiritual gifts which he had enjoyed. When Adam failed, Christ, the second Adam, came and persisted in obedience unto death. Then having laid down his life and taken it again, he obtained the blessings of God for himself and for those in whose place he had stood during his life and death.[61]

Mutuality and Conditionality

Those who speak of Olevianus' covenantal thought as reflecting a gratuitous covenant resting on the promise of God alone, speak rightly.[62] The problem lies in what they ignore. The covenant, according to Olevianus, was indeed gratuitous. It was contained in the free promise and mercy of God and did not depend on any conditions or stipulations to be fulfilled in human strength.[63] It was

free and undeserved, and 'leaneth upon no condition of our worthinesse or merites, but standeth by faith alone'.[64]

The covenant rested entirely upon the predestinating purpose and providence of God. Election in Christ was 'the fountaine of the covenant' and reconciliation.[65] It flowed from the love and grace of a God who was wholly free and supremely good.[66] Grounded in so excellent a love, it was no 'meane and common covenant'.[67] The will of this God was for Olevianus the measure of all things. When men did evil, and did it according to their own will, yet they simply did according to what was determined before to be done. God's decree of reprobation and election determined both the creation of a perfect race and the fall of humanity since both were designed to manifest God's holiness and righteousness in the judgement and deliverance of whom he willed.[68] Olevianus obviously held to a supralapsarian doctrine of predestination in a way that makes explanation very difficult for those who see him as part of a federal reaction against Bezean predestination.[69]

It has of course also been said that Olevianus' supralapsarianism makes any idea of a conditional covenant difficult to explain, and that Olevianus 'transferred the idea of conditions to the natural or legal covenant', thus smoothing out the complexities of Calvin's covenant thought.[70] But this assertion does not do justice to the evidence. Calvin needed no one to transfer the idea of conditions to his view of the *foedus legale*. He was well aware of them, and knew what to do with them himself. Secondly, Olevianus understood the covenant of grace in a conditional sense as well as a gratuitous one. Contemplation on the doctrine of God's eternal will and providence, he said, should not only enable men to see that God was in absolute control of all creation and that nothing was left to chance, it should also encourage the use of the means that God has provided as gifts of his providence.[71]

Olevianus, therefore, did not hesitate to speak of the covenant of grace in terms of a mutual agreement or bond.[72] One of Christ's duties as king was to engender in the elect the study of reconciling themselves to God.[73] In doing this he 'giveth also unto them the same reconciliation and that in the forme of a covenant...the reconciliation of men with God...is therefore called a covenant, and also set foorth unto us in forme of a covenant from God, because there is no apter forme or meeter way of doing it, to make mutuall agreement betweene the parties and to the establishing of faith'.[74] Those who thus studied to reconcile themselves with God, did so by denying themselves, giving themselves unto faith, and by forsaking other gods, for 'God cannot tolerate at any hand that there should be fellowship with his confederates, in the invocation and worship of false gods'.[75]

Olevianus could also speak of men striking and entering into 'a covenant of faith' with God,[76] and of the danger to which they exposed themselves who refused to believe.[77] Again, continued Olevianus, God 'hath not spared of his meere goodnes even by an oath and covenant to binde himselfe unto *us that are repentant and believe in him*'. Believers, in turn, bound themselves in the sacraments unto the faith and worship of God.[78] God's covenant with Abraham included both promise and condition. For him, circumcision was a sign of the mutual ratification of the covenant. God promised to be Abraham's God, but under the condition of a repromise (*sub conditione repromissio*) by Abraham to walk before God and be perfect.[79]

The sacraments were regarded by Olevianus as signs of the 'mutual covenant of grace' (*mutui foederis gratuiti*),[80] in such a way that 'the unilateral promise of reconciliation demands a bilateral committment to its terms'.[81] In the word and sacraments God announced his gracious intention together with his commandments and the

condition of faith. But as both parties were sworn in any covenant, men in turn pledged fidelity and obedience,[82] and God then sealed his blessings in their hearts.[83] The Lord's supper especially demonstrated the two-sided nature of the covenant. The bread and wine constituted a visible guarantee and reaffirmation of God's faithfulness to his covenant promise, but participating was for his people a new affirmation of dependence upon his grace and of obedience to his will.[84] The sacraments, therefore, as covenantal signs were not to be despised. Willing disregard or unworthy participation through unbelief was tantamount to repudiating or profaning the covenant.[85]

Concerning those who violated or profaned the covenant, there is evident in Olevianus' thought a distinction between the covenant made generally and externally with Israel and the visible church and the covenant proper made particularly and internally with the faithful or the elect.[86] Those who were reprobate could be 'ioyned to the visible church', and partake physically of the sacraments just as some in Israel partook of the outward benefits of the Abrahamic covenant.[87] But in both cases only the elect partook of the spiritual benefits of the covenant and could be said to be in the kingdom or in the covenant proper.[88] Only to them did the redeeming work of Christ properly pertain.[89]

The reprobate also included any children of the faithful who grew up to demonstrate their non-election by rejecting the covenant through unbelief, and who would consequently be excised from the covenant.[90] Generally speaking the covenant promises were a source of comfort and assurance to believing parents, who were to bring up their children as belonging to the covenant; nevertheless, the possibility of non-election remained.[91] That, however, was a matter to be left in God's hands. Parents were to concentrate on their responsibility to teach and train their children in accordance with the terms of the covenant

made with God in baptism, but at the end of the day neither their obedience or the sacrament brought salvation, which was entirely of grace through faith, and 'to discern hypocrites from the faithful is onely the worke of God'.[92]

What really distinguished the reprobate from the elect, or those in the covenant outwardly from those in the covenant inwardly, was the internal operation of the Holy Spirit, whose chief works were to produce faith, prayer and union with Christ.[93] Faith and union with Christ were continually emphasized by Olevianus as the true characteristics of being elect and in true covenant with God.

The covenant between God and his people only stood in faith, and it was the Holy Spirit, freely and undeservedly given, 'who bringeth to passe that both we will and are able to beleeve the free promise of reconcilation through Christ'.[94] Olevianus described faith as assent unto the entire will and word of God, which was the rule of faith.[95] It beheld especially the covenantal promises of the gospel offered concerning free justification and engrafting into Christ, but it also comprehended the whole life of man and his continual sanctification and preservation.[96] And 'by the name faith we are put in minde of that same most streight covenant confirmed between God and us, in Christ his onely sonne, and of his unchangeable love towards us', and thus made God's confederates.[97]

The elect enjoyed the fruits of faith and the effects of their covenantal relationship with God both in this life and in the life to come because they were engrafted into Christ and would be 'fully knitte both body and soule with Iesus Christe our heade'.[98] It was only through union with Christ effected by the Holy Spirit that the elect came to be partakers of all the benefits of the salvation accomplished by Christ.[99] Olevianus also linked the idea of covenant union with adoption. It was by the adoption of grace that the elect were 'engraffed into his Sonne',

and came under the government and quickening of the Spirit as confederates and sons of God.[100] This 'indissoluble bond' of eternal union with Christ through the Spirit was for Olevianus the very substance and essence of the covenantal relationship between God and his people.[101] Unbelievers could partake of the outward benefits of the covenant, but only the elect could partake of the spiritual benefits of bethrothal with Christ.[102]

Olevianus also stressed the necessity of good works in the lives of the regenerate. Those who were justified and restored by the Spirit were exhorted to good works, because it was part of the marriage covenant of faith ratified by the king with his church that his people should conform to divine righteousness and the will of God.[103] The faith of the kingdom, Olevianus added, embraced the free remission of sinnes, and thereby 'engendereth the instauration or renewing of men according to the image of God'.[104] The demands of God's law were fully satisfied in Christ on behalf of the elect, but the law remained as a rule for those who were justified, by which to conform their lives to the will of God. The same law that was written in stone at Sinai was again written in the hearts of the elect.[105]

Believers were also exhorted to make themselves ready for judgement by means of faith and a good conscience, that is,'by a faith which leaneth upon a fast and sure foundation: and by the fruites of faith which doe beare witnesse of it and with which it is exercised'.[106] Where saving faith and union with Christ, effected by the Spirit, were the internal distinguishing marks of the elect, the external marks were the fruits of faith in the sanctification and good works of the believer.[107] What was envisaged by Olevianus was a return to the prefall use of the law.[108] God 'writeth his lawe in our hearts, that through his Spirite he beginneth a newe obedience'. Though that obedience was always imperfect in this life,

God would not remember the shortcomings of his people, because they were accounted for in the covenant which he himself had made in the death of Christ. Where these two factors were to be found, said Olevianus, 'there is a sure friendship, a constant and everlasting covenant'.[109]

Summary

Heidelberg undoubtedly played a significant part in the development of Reformed covenantal thought. It is however claiming too much to say that federal theology originated there. But it can be affirmed that the ideas of the covenant which pervaded the thinking of the earlier Reformers, received more precise definition and a more distinctive mention in the external framework of the writings of the Heidelberg divines.

The covenant was an important feature in the works of both Ursinus and Olevianus. For them the entire *scopus* of Scripture and the whole range of apostolic doctrine could be embraced under its rubric. Both continued the early Reformed stress on the covenant as the unifying factor in the redemptive purpose of God throughout both Testamental eras, and also carried forward the exposition of the sacraments as seals and signs of the one covenant of grace.[110]

Notice was taken of the suggested difference between the concept of the covenant employed by Ursinus and that of Olevianus on the ground that one taught a conditional, bilateral covenant inherited from Bullinger, while the other had a 'Calvinistic notion of unilateral testament'[111] But this apparent difference, which could be surmised from specific statements of Ursinus and Olevianus on the covenant, was seen to be no more than a question of emphasis when examined in the broader context of their theological thought.

The relationship of the law to the gospel and the importance of the place and nature of the mediatorial work

of Christ in relation to covenantal thought followed the general Reformed tradition and was not necessarily influenced by Wittenberg any more than Geneva. The fact that the alleged Melanchthonian contributions were seen clearly to be in the mainstream of Reformed theological development, demonstrated, as Lillback pointed out, that 'a synergistic notion cannot be placed at the source of covenant theology in general or the covenant of works in particular... It must be further emphasized that Ursinus is found to be in agreement with Melanchthon only when Melanchthon's views are in unison with the Reformed theology'.[112] The unity and continuity of Reformed covenantal theology can be established as a single movement, not a dual tradition, through Zurich and Geneva, and Heidelberg as well.

The mutual respect and co-operation that existed between Geneva and Heidelberg would tend to discount any fundamental theological division. Hollweg has argued a strong case for the influence of Beza's *Confessio* on the *Heidelberg Catechism*.[113] Again, Beza was so impressed with the work of Ursinus and Olevianus that he highly recommended and published three commentaries of the latter in Geneva,[114] and wrote his *Epitaphe on Zacharias Ursinus* in 1583.[115] Considerable correspondence passed between Beza and the Heidelberg theologians, but unfortunately, as the editors of the *Correspondance* indicate, not much of it has been preserved.[116]

On the question of methodology both Ursinus and Olevianus reflected the kind of flexibility that was characteristic of Reformed theology in this area. This was particularly so with regard to the influence of Ramus, about whom further comment is needed. The significance of Ramus for federal theology has been seriously exaggerated. To suggest that the philosophy and methodology of Ramus is 'the missing piece in the jig-saw' of how covenantal thinking came to be described in the dual terms of covenant

of works and covenant of grace is little more than conjecture based on a simple bifurcation.[117]

There is no evidence that Ramus affected the *content* of Reformed theology in any way. His own effort at making a contribution to theology was rightly consigned to the limbo of inadequate and unoriginal things. No Reformed theologian would have given it a second reading.[118] Covenantal theology had a strong practical and ethical stress long before Ramus' contention that the essence of theology as of other sciences lay in πραξισ.[119]

As far as Ramus' methodology was concerned his opposition to Aristotelian argumentation earned him some scathing criticism from theologians who knew better than to think that Aristotle could be so lightly dismissed. This, however, did not prevent even those who opposed him most, from utilizing his method of dichotomous subdivision where appropriate. But this was no novelty in theology, especially a theology that was bent on returning to the Scriptures. The Bible was full of bifurcations from the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent at the beginning of Genesis to the denizens of hell and the inhabitants of the holy city at the end of Revelation. The Bible was to Reformed theologians a great book of contrast between the righteous and the wicked in all aspects of life and being. Every positive it announced had its corresponding negative. Calvin's writings, especially the *Institutes*, are packed with such bifurcations. It would be quite easy from the *Institutes* to compile a Ramist-style chart beginning with wisdom consisting in the knowledge of God and ourselves; the knowledge of God then being twofold as Creator and Redeemer, and so on.[120]

The fact is that the Ramist method simply lent itself to Reformed theology. It did not affect the content, not even in Polanus, who took it to the extreme of forty-five pages of charts attached to his *Partitiones Theologicae*.[121]

Those who took up and taught Ramism, like Fenner, Ames, Melville, Rollock and Temple, did not thereby dissociate themselves from Aristotelianism.[122] Nor did they separate from fellow theologians like Beza and Ursinus on account of their refusal to allow Ramus to teach at Geneva and Heidelberg.

Furthermore the bifurcation of covenantal theology on the lines of works/grace was already present in the division by Calvin and Beza of the *foedus legale* and the *foedus gratiae*. Beza, it was noted, had already used the term 'doctrine of works' over against 'the covenant of grace'. The substitution of the words 'covenant' for 'doctrine', and 'works' for 'law' did not require the methodological genius of Ramus or anyone else.[123] It borders on the ridiculous to cite Olevianus' division of the covenant of grace into substance and administration as due to 'undoubted Ramist influences in his work'.[124] Ramus was not yet out of primary school when Reformed theologians were making such a distinction. And when the idea of a prelapsarian covenant on the basis of natural law, which was already expressed in Calvin's theology, was defined more precisely by his successors it was simply a matter of extending a bifurcation already common in Reformed theology.

NOTES: Chapter Fifteen

1 Olevianus, 'To the Youth Addicted to True Godliness', a preface to *An Exposition of the Symbole of the Apostles*, trs. J. Fielde, (London, 1581), 38-39; (see n.6 below).

2 For biographical details see: J. Marx, *Casper Olevianus*, (Mainz, 1846); M. Göebel, 'Dr. Casper Olevianus', *Mercersburg Review*, 7. (1855), 294-306; Sudhoff, *C. Olevianus und Z. Ursinus*, (Eberfeld, 1857); D. Agnew, 'Casper Olevianus', *The Theology of Consolation*, (Edinburgh, 1880), 317-318; E.W. Cuno, *Blätter der Erinnerung an Dr. Kasper Olevianus*, (Barmen, 1887); J. Ney, *Die Reformation in Trier 1559*, (Halle, 1906-1907); 'Olevianus', *NSHE*, 8.235; E. Iserloh, 'Olevianus', *LFK*, 7.1145-1146; J.G.G. Norman, 'Olevianus', *NIDCC*, 729; 'Olevianus', *WDCC*, ed. J.C. Bauer, 615; J.F.G. Goeters, 'Casper Olevian', *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 4.1626; G. Bouwmeester, *Casper Olevianus en Zyn Reformatorische Arbeid*, (Gravenhage, 1954). See also works on *Heidelberg Catechism* etc. *infra*, 2.135 n.5.

3 Göebel, *op.cit.*, 298.

4 For discussions of Olevianus' role in the authorship of the *Catechism*: W. Hollweg, *Neue Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Lehre des Heidelberger Katechismus*, (Neukirchen, 1968); L.D. Bierma, 'Olevianus and the Authorship of the Heidelberg Catechism: Another Look', *SCJ* 13. (1986), 17-27.

5 Ursinus *In Epistolam D. Pauli Apostoli ad Galatas notae*, ed. T. Beza, (Geneva, 1578); *In Epistolam D. Pauli Apostoli ad Romanos notae, ex Gasparis Oleviani concionibus excerptae, & a Theodoro Beza editae*, (Geneva, 1579); *In Epistolas D. Pauli Apostoli ad Philippenses et Colossenses* ed. T. Beza, (Geneva, 1580).

6 *Expositio symboli apostolici, sive articulorum fidei: in qua summa gratuiti foederis aeterni inter Deum et fideles breviter et perspicue tractatur*, (Frankfurt, 1584); English translation used: *An Exposition of the Symbole of the Apostles, or rather of the Articles of Faith*, trs. J. Field, (London, 1581).

7 *De substantia foederis gratuiti inter Deum et Electos*, (Geneva, 1585). In a letter to Bullinger dated 25 Oct,1563, Olevianus referred to working on a larger catechism dealing with the most important doctrines and following the method used in the smaller one, (see text in Sudhoff *op.cit.*, 485). This larger catechism was *Vester Grund* which forms Part Two of *De Substantia* and is similar in structure to Ursinus' *Cat. Minor*, (1562). The smaller one was probably *Bauernkatechismus*. The full title of

larger was *Vester Grund, das ist, Die Artickel des alten, waren, ungezweiffelten Christlichen Glaubens*, (Heidelberg 1567). See Bierma, 'Authorship', 21, 23.

8 *Der Gnadenbund Gottes* was not available to this research, and relies on Bierma's use of the Herborn edition (1593); see Bierma, 'Authorship', 21.

9 Schrenk, *Gottesreich*, 59-62; Ritschl, *Dogmengeschichte*, 3.418-420; Karlberg, 'The Mosaic Covenant', 95-99; 'Reformed Interpretation', 18-20; Stoever, 'The Covenant of Works', 30-31; McKee, 'The Idea of the Covenant', 25-26; McCoy, 'Johannes Cocceius', 73-76; Baker, *Bullinger and the Covenant*, 203-205; Ishbell, 'The Origin of the Concept', 24-31; DeYong, *Covenant Idea*, (Grand Rapids, 1945); Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.196-206; Weir, '*Foedus Naturale*', 144, 150-151, 161ff.

10 Bierma, 'The Covenant Theology of Casper Olevian'. PhD Thesis (Duke University, 1980); see also his 'Federal Theology in the Sixteenth Century: Two Traditions?', *WTJ*, 45. (1983), 316-320.

11 DeYong, *op.cit.*, for Bullinger; Stoever, *op.cit.*, 31 n.5 for Ursinus; Barth, *CD*, 4'.59 and McKee, *op.cit.*, 25; and Karlberg, 'The Mosaic Covenant', 95, 'Reformed Interpretation', 18, for Calvin; Muller, 'Predestination and Christology', 314,433 for both Bullinger and Calvin.

12 Heppe, *Dogmatik des deutschen*, 1.143ff; Schrenk, *op.cit.*, 59f; Brown, 'Covenant Theology', 220.

13 Moltmann, *op.cit.*, 295-318; Letham, 'Foedus Operum', 266.

14 Baker, *op.cit.*, 204; Lang, *Der Heidelberger*, 21-22; Møller, 'The Beginnings', 58, who says Olevianus wrote 'the first Calvinist dogmatic treatise' on the covenant.

15 . *Ibid.*, 205.

16 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 199-201.

17 cf. Ursinus, *infra*, 2.130.

18 Bierma, 'Federal Theology', 320; 'The Covenant Theology of Casper Olevian' 210-250.

19 Olevianus, *Expos.*, 44-45.

Ibid., 44-46,130.

20 *Ibid.*, 44-46, 48; cf. 130; *De Sub.*, 123.

21 *Ibid.*, 53-54.

22 *Ibid.*, 59

23 *De Sub.*, 229-230; *Ad Rom.*, 8:15 (345), 11:27 (586-587); *Ad Col.*, 2:14 (144).

24 *Expos.*, 240.

25 *Ibid.*, 233; cf. 93-94; *De Sub.*, 230-231, 295; *Ad Rom.*, 9:2-9 (413-418); *Ad Phil.*, 3:9-10 (50); *Ad Gal.*, 3:6ff (43ff).

26 *Ad Col.*, 1:15 (88); cf. 1:18 (105).

27 *De Sub.*, 294-295.

28 *Ibid.*, 227-231.

29 *Ad Rom.*, 8:15 (347); *Ad Col.*, 2:14 (141-142).

30 *Expos.*, 80-81; cf. 52-53; *De Sub.*, 247ff.

31 *De Sub.*, 401-408; *Ad Rom.*, 11:17-18 (570); *Ad Col.*, 1:10 (130).

32 *Ad Rom.*, 2:25-28 (114-115); *Ad Phil.*, 3:3 (36-37); *Ad Col.*, 2:11 (134-135).

33 *Ad Gal.*, 5:6 (109); *De Sub.*, 331-335.

34 *Expos.*, 81, 242-243.

35 *Ad Gal.*, 3:19 (72).

36 *Ibid.*, 3:10 (50), 3:11-12 (55).

37 *Ad Phil.*, 3:9-10 (43); *Ad Gal.*, 3:13-14 (57), 3:21 (75).

38 *De Sub.*, 251, 253-254; *Der Gnadenbund*, (Herborn, 1593), 11-12, quoted by Ishbell, *op.cit.*, 31.

39 *Ad Phil.*, 3:9-10 (43); *De Sub.*, 207, 254; *Ad Rom.* 7:12 (290).

40 *Expos.*, 49-51; cf. *De Sub.*, 151-152, 195-196, 250-251, 298, 300-301; *Ad Rom.*, 1:18 (30), 1:29-31 (58-59), 1:32 (64-65), 2:12-14 (99), 7:5-7 (273-274).

41 *De Sub.*, 9, 26, 270.

42 *Ibid.*, 9-10.

43 *Ibid.*, 10, 253; *Expos.*, 138 (irr. pagination).

44 *Expos.*, 44-45, 129-130, 138 (irr. pag.), 145-146; *De Sub.*, 140; *Der Gnadenbund*, 381, where fallen man must be turned from *Gemeinschaft* with Satan to *Gemeinschaft* with Christ', cited by Bierma, 'Casper Olevian', 182.

45 *Ad Gal.*, 3:21 (75-76); *De Sub.*, 250-251.

46 *Ad Rom.*, 1:21-31 (58); *De Sub.*, 270-272.

47 *Ibid.*, 1:18 (59); 1:32 (64-65); 7:5-7 (273-274).

48 *Expos.*, 49ff; cf. *De Sub.*, 12-13, 251.

49 *Ad Gal.*, 3:21 (75), 4:26 (98), cf.2:14ff (27ff); *Ad Phil.*, 3:9 (43).

50 . *Ibid.*, 3:2 (40-41), 3:21 (76); *Ad Rom.*, 3:21-23 (134-135); 7:9 (285-286); 10:4 (495).

51 *Ibid.*, 75.

52 *Expos.*, 59, 126.

53 *Ibid.*, 126; *De Sub.*, 227-228.

54 *Ibid.*, 140-143.

55 *Ibid.*, 144-146; cf. *Ad Phil.*, 3:11-14 (63).

56 *Ibid.*, 149-150; cf. 137 (1rr. pag.); *De Sub.*, 23, 39, 86, 100, 133, 227-228.

57 *De Sub.*, 124-125; cf. 48, 60-63; see Schrenk, *op.cit.*, 61, and Ritschl, *op.cit.*, 3:419, who regard this as a pretemporal covenant, or at least the rudiments of one.

58 *Expos.*, 117-123; *De Sub.*, 22-26, 60-70, 121-125; see Bierma, 'Casper Olevian', 161-168.

59 *Ad Gal.*, 3:11-12 (53).

60 *Expos.*, 53, 123-127; *De Sub.*, 64-65, 127-130, 296-298; cf. Ursinus, *infra*, 2.127.

61 *De Sub.*, 79-80; cf.86, 96, 105, 381ff.

62 Letham. 'Saving Faith', 1.199; Baker, *op.cit.*, 204-205.

63 Olevianus, *De Sub.*, 1-3, 15.

64 *Expos.*, 54.

65 *Ibid.*, 25, 38, 59, 98-99; *Ad Rom.*, 9:24-25 (460-462).

66 *De Sub.* 215-216.

67 *Expos.*, 130-131.

68 *Ibid.*, 98-99; *De Sub.*, 28-33.

69 Schrenk, *op.cit.*; Heppe, *op.cit.* ; Moltmann, *op.cit.*. *Contra* Letham, 'Saving Faith', 202, who asserted that Olevianus' doctrine of predestination was infralapsarian, and for Bierma,'Casper Olevian', 118-119, who insisted it was supralapsarian.

70 Baker, *op.cit.*, 205.

71 Olevianus, *Expos.*, 96-104.

72 *Ad Rom.*, 9:1-5 (407) 'Foedera quae a promissionibus distinguit, sunt mutuae illae et saepe renovatae conventiones inter Deum et populum.'

73 *Ibid.*, 49.

74 *Ibid.*, 52.

75 *Ibid.*, 51, 92.

76 *Ibid.*, 91.

77 *Ibid.*, 83-83, cf. 88.

78 *Ibid.*, 52-53 (my itals.); *Ad Gal.*, 3:27 (81).

79 *Ad Rom.*, 2:17 (108-110). *Contra* Letham, 'Saving Faith', 200-201, where he says that Olevianus 'eschews the conditional formulation of Bullinger which Ursinus adopted'.

80 *De Sub.*, 407-408.

81 Bierma, 'Casper Olevian', 143.

82 Olevianus, *Expos.*, 53; *De Sub.*, 315-320, 385-388, 392; *Ad Gal.*, 1:8 (6).

83 *De Sub.*, 329-331, 409-411.

84 *Ibid.*, 197-221, 385-411.

85 *Ibid.*, 306-309, 412-416; cf. 197-201; *Ad Gal.*, 2:21; *Ad Col.*, 2:11 (133-138).

86 *Ibid.*, 197ff, 217ff, 247ff; *Ad Rom.*, 11:17-18 (574).

87 *Expos.*, 44-45, 237f; *De Sub.*, 1-3, 220-224; *Ad Rom.*, 2:25-29 (107-118).

88 *De Sub.*, 1-3, 217ff.

89 *Expos.*, 52-53 etc.; *De Sub.*, 62-63, 68-71.

90 *Ibid.*, 44-45; *Ad Rom.*, 11:17-18 (574).

91 *Ad Gal.*, 2:14-16 (27-28); *De Sub.*, 306-309.

92 *Expos.*, 78-79; *De Sub.*, 198-200.

93 *Ibid.*, 224-225; cf. *Ad Rom.*, 2:25-28 (113-114); *De Sub.*, 217-218, 226-229 'in capito Christu per gratiam et vinculum Spiritus sancti cum iis indissolubili nexu se uniat.'

94 *Ibid.*, 54-55; *De Sub.*, 124-125.

95 *Ibid.*, 56-58.

96 *Ibid.*, 57 (marked 37. irr. pagination); *De Sub.*, 15-17, 208-209.

97 *Ibid.*, 92, 111.

98 *Ibid.*, 59.

99 *De Sub.*, 124-125, 226-227.

100 *Expos.*, 129-131; *De Sub.*, 36-38; cf. 97-99, 102-102.

101 *De Sub.*, 26-27, 44, 217-218, 226 'Ut fundamentum foederis gratuitae adoptionis coniunctionisque inter Deum et nos esset firmissimum, voluit coelestis Pater Filium suum aeternum assumere nostram naturam, hoc est animam et corpus humanum in unitatem suae personae.'

102 Olevianus was familiar with the idea of the covenant in terms of marriage: cf. *Ad Rom.*, 7:1-4 (264-267). He too

was acquainted with Bernard's *Sermons on Canticles*; see *Ad Col.*, 4:5-10 (190).

103 *Expos.*, 47.

104 *Ibid.*, 56.

105 *Ad Phil.*, 3:9-10 (43); *Ad Col.*, 3:8-9 (159).

106 *Expos.* 228.

107 *De Sub.*, 217-218

108 *Ad Gal.*, 3:19 (71); *De Sub.*, 294-295.

109 *Expos.*, 245; *De Sub.*, 331; cf. *Ad Gal.*, 3:13-14 (59-61).

110 Weir, '*Foedus Naturale*', 187, claimed that the development of federal theology had nothing to do with sacramental theology, but the close connection between the two doctrines is evident.

111 Baker, *op.cit.*, 204.

112 Lillback, 'The Binding of God', 268-269

113 Hollweg, *Neue Untersuchungen*, 86-123; see Bierma, 'Authorship' 23 n.6; Sturm, *Der Junge Zacharian Ursin*, 171-172, 189, 248-253, 268.

114 Olevianus, *Ad Rom*; *Ad Gal.*; *Ad Phil.et Col.*; see n.5.

115 J. Raitt, 'Beza's Theological Works 1564-1603', Unpublished MSS, 6.

116 Beza, *Correspondance*, 11. 737. n.1; see also 3. 83-85; 96-98; Sturm, *op.cit.*, 163f, 235; Visser, *Zacharias Ursinus*, 185-186, 231.

117 Letham, 'Foedus Operum', 464-667.

118 Ramus, *Commentariorum de religione Christiana, libri quatuor*, (Frankfurt, 1576).

119 *Ibid.*, 6-10; cf. Moltmann, *op.cit.*, 312; Letham, 'Saving Faith', 2.134 n.6.

120 Calvin, *Inst.*, I.1.1; I.2.1 etc.

121 A. Polanus, *Partitiones theologiae iuxta naturalis methodi leges conformatae duobis libris*, (Basel, 1602); Eng. trans. *The Substance of the Christian Religion*, (London, 1595).

122 Ong, *Ramus, Method and Decay*, 301-305; *Inventory*, 512, 524, 531; Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.465-467.

123 T. Cartwright used these terms interchangeably; see *infra*, 2.169.

124 Letham, 'Foedus Operum', 466.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Puritan Stream: Thomas Cartwright and Dudley Fenner

Since the 'rehabilitation' of the Puritans by Perry Miller as a subject worthy of modern research, the direction given by him and those who have followed his lead in viewing the covenant in terms of a dual tradition (bilateral Zurich/Rhineland/Tyndale tradition as opposed to unilateral Genevan tradition) has caused considerable difficulties and confusion in Puritan studies. One question is: Which stream was the more prominent or influential? Trinterud maintained that Puritan 'ideas and ideals, were taken up not primarily from John Calvin or Geneva', but that 'the Genevan influences came late, after the essential pattern of Puritanism had been established'.[1] Greaves, on the other hand, also an advocate of the twin tradition school, claimed that the Genevan stream was 'certainly the more dominant of the two'.[2]

Another difficulty lies in deciding in which stream individual Puritan writers are to be located. The confusion is compounded when one historian uncompromisingly places a Puritan writer on the covenant in the contractual, conditional stream, while another with equal dogmatism assigns the same writer a niche in the unilateral, testamental category. For example, Letham claimed that for Perkins 'the covenant is conditional and contractual', while Priebe, in his study on 'The Covenant Theology of William Perkins' asserted that 'Perkin's idea of the covenant is not that of the conditional-contractual type, but in reality affirms the priority and primacy of the unconditional promise or testament in a manner most nearly identical to that of Calvin'.[3] Again, Miller was of the opinion that John Preston took the word covenant 'to suggest a bargain, a contract, a mutual agreement...with an

audacity which must have caused John Calvin to turn in his grave', while Greaves more cautiously said that Preston's sermons on the covenant embodied 'elements of both streams'.[4]

Leaving aside the question of Tyndale's influence on English covenantal thought, the genesis of the Puritan movement was so closely related to the influence of the Genevan reformation and theologians on the Marian exiles that it is from this source that continuity of Reformed theological concepts are to be sought. In relation to the flow of covenantal theology into the Puritan movement, the significance of two men, Dudley Fenner (1558?-1587) and Thomas Cartwright (1535-1603), has been repeatedly indicated, but their works have not been assessed in any detail.[5] Their thinking on the covenant was so identical (one suggested difference on closer examination will be seen to disappear) that they can be considered together.

Dudley Fenner was probably the first theologian to use the term *foedus operum* in a theological work. He was born in Kent, and studied at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, from January 1575, becoming a close friend of Cartwright, who was then teaching at the University. In the reaction against the Puritans at Cambridge, he followed Cartwright into exile to Antwerp, where he was ordained. During Grindal's primacy he returned to an assistantship at Cranbrook Church in 1583, but was apprehended and imprisoned when, with sixteen other Kentish ministers, he refused to subscribe to Whitgift's articles of conformity. He was released to return to the Continent where he rejoined Cartwright, this time at Middelburg.[6]

Fenner's exiles and his short life go some way to explaining his neglect in the study of historical theology, but he did leave a number of significant written works - church government and anti-papist tracts,[7] a treatise on *The Artes of Logike and Rethorike*,[8] a translation of the Canticles,[9] and several theological treatises,[10] the most

important of which was *Sacra Theologia* (1585). This latter volume was apparently seven years in preparation and was submitted for inspection to Cartwright, who wrote a prefatory epistle for it, dated 3rd September, 1583.[11] It was this work which set out the covenant as twofold under the specific terms 'covenant of works' and 'covenant of grace':

Foedus duplex est {operum *foedus* / gratuitae promissionis *foedus*}[12]

Cartwright's catechisms followed suit with a description of divine revelation in Scripture as 'The lawe and the ghospell, otherwyse called the covenant of Woorkes and the covenant of Grace', and used them interchangeably with the terms already noted in Beza, 'the doctrine of works' in contrast to the doctrine of grace.[13]

Mainstream Puritans needed no intermediaries to acquaint them with the writings and thought of the first generation Swiss reformers, both in Zurich and Geneva. But there is an interesting link-up of associations which make Cartwright and Fenner very significant in the flow of Reformed theology. For example, Fenner was sufficiently interested in Beza's concern over Castellio's attack on the 'certayne and undoubted authoritie' of the Song of Songs, to come to its defence with a translation, even though it was clearly Beza's 'similar and better' work that appeared while he was preparing his own.[14] In this connection, Fenner, like Beza and Olevianus had also looked at Bernard's *33 Sermons on the Canticles*, and stressed the mutuality of the covenanted love between Christ and his spouse.[15]

Again, Cartwright's associations with Geneva are well known. Not only did he cite Calvin again and again in his works making him one of his major sources, if not *the* main one; he had also personally visited Geneva and befriended Beza. The records of the city council show that he taught theology there during 1571.[16] Beza's opinion of him was

that 'the sun doth not see a more learned man', and he recommended him to Queen Elizabeth as 'far abler than himself' to undertake a refutation of the Rhemists Translation of the New Testament.[17] Other Reformed theologians like Polyander were of the opinion that 'If any one ranked with Calvin and Beza...it is Thomas Cartwright'.[18] Fenner, when defending the writings of Cartwright, saw him as standing in the line of Calvin, Beza and Martyr. In supporting Cartwright's authority to write as he had done, he suggested that if 'the Bishop can so handsomlie wipe away' the works of these men in their commentaries and treatises, along with the evidence of Scripture, then he could do so with Cartwright.[19] Fenner observed no divergence in Puritanism from Calvin. In *An Answer unto the Confutation* he challenged those who would suggest this: 'Were you so shamelesse...or madde, as to holde that the Calvinist, and those whome you call Puritans, do differ in doctrine: when you cannot shewe so much as a difference, in the least opinion apperteyning to the matter of true religion amongst them'.[20]

Cartwright's critics also saw him in the same light. Heylen described him as 'the very Calvin of the English',[21] and others regarded him as 'a borrower of Calvin and Beza'.[22] But Cartwright's associations were not confined to Geneva. The records of Heidelberg University reveal that he matriculated on 25 January, 1574, and his correspondence was still addressed from there in February, 1576. During that time of study he became closely acquainted with Ursinus, Olevianus and Zanchius.[23]

Fenner and Cartwight, especially the former, are further examples of those who utilized Ramean methodology while dismissing Ramus' efforts in theology. The opening section of *Sacra Theologia* is practically a deliberate corrective to Ramus' definition of theology, underlining the Calvinian view of theology as the true knowledge of God rather than the art of living well,[24] and that God and the

actions of God were the main branches of theology rather than faith and the actions of faith.[25] Cartwright's *Harmonia evangelica commentario* provides a good example of the use of both Ramist methodology and Aristotelian causality.[26]

Again, there is no question of the clear, covenantal theology in Fenner and Cartwright being regarded as a softening of Bezean scholastic predestinarianism. Fenner defined predestination as the eternal divine decree concerning the salvation and condemnation of the creatures.[27] It was a double predestination, one to the glory of God's grace and the other to the praise of his justice, and rooted in the single will of God (*ex ευδοκία τῶ θελήματος τῶ θεω*).[28] This was the ultimate reason why some understood the gospel and others did not: 'God appointed freely to chuse some to Christ unto salvation through faith, and for the prayse of his riche grace: and iustly to cast awaye others, when they should by their own default deserve the same'.[29] Like the earlier Reformers, Fenner was very conscious of the persistent charge of making God to be the cause and author of sin. Nevertheless, he firmly placed the fall and the salvation of men under the decree and distinguished between the decree and its execution corresponding to the secret and revealed will of God, as Calvin and Beza had done.[30]

Cartwright made the same distinction, describing the decree and its execution as the two parts of God's kingdom.[31] He said that 'the secret will of God was the event of al things' and was unknown to men until it came to pass, whereas 'the revealed will is of those things onely which are propounded in the word'.[32] There was no contrariety in spite of appearances. The predestination which 'breaketh the neck of merit or desert by workes in us', did not eliminate man's responsibility for his sin. Men were condemned for their own sin, yet God's will was 'the efficient cause of Reprobation, and not the sinne it

selfe, no more then the good workes are the efficient cause of our election to life everlasting'.[33]

The covenant proper concerned only the elect, that is, those redeemed by Christ and called by the gospel. It cannot be said that Fenner's doctrine of election is not Christocentric, when the entire theology of both men referred the saving work of Christ and the effectual work of the Holy Spirit in salvation solely to the elect.[34] It was in the eternal election and effectual calling of the faithful that the certainty and surety of the covenant stood. The salvation of the elect was never in doubt. Though an abundance of hypocrites should claim allegiance to the covenant, it was always sure because some were certainly called and elected 'wherever God caused the gospel to be preached'.[35]

Fenner indicated that it was only to the elect that the work of the Mediator of the covenant truly pertained. There was however an internal and an external administration in the church and among the people of God. Reprobates could be in the external administration, and even manifest a certain zeal for such things.[36] It was only to the elect, who were savingly called and received grace and the gift of true faith, to whom the internal administration belonged. They were thus incorporated into Christ and became part of the true church.[37]

Cartwright spoke of both wicked and godly in the church, and held that there were things pertaining to both the covenant of works and the covenant of grace that belonged to both, but some things pertained only to the godly. Both could understand something of the word and delight in it, giving a measure of consent to it. Both could desire a happy end, be pricked in conscience and show sorrow for their faults, confessing them with reformation of life. The motive of the wicked, however, was solely the fear of judgement and the satisfaction of their own desires; the godly grieved the offence they gave to a

gracious God, and wanted to live for his glory, even with persecution. The root difference was that one had true faith and a heart softened and changed by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the ingrafted word.[39]

The same distinction was made in their teaching on the sacraments. The outward ministry of ministers, parents and church members was to join 'in quickening faith by the covenant of God'.[39] But outward work was of no help unless faith and the work of the Spirit was wrought inwardly, applying to the receiver the work of Christ and 'the covenant concerning iustification and sanctification unto eternall life, fullie ratified and confirmed in him'.[40] Like many in Israel, there were still those who received only the outward signs of the covenant, neglecting or refusing the spiritual grace represented and truly offered to them. But in the true children of God, the sacrament, 'by faith alone, doth seale up, that is, most surely, firmly, certainlie, and comfortablie apply Christ unto us, and al his gifts necessarie for us, according to the covenant and promises of God in him'.[41] The sacraments were therefore the seal which 'assuredlie applied to the true members of Christ only, Christ Jesus and the covenant of grace fully ratified in him'.[42]

Faith was defined by Cartwright as an assured 'perswasion of my hart, that God hath given his sonne for me, and that he is mine, and I am his'.[43] But true faith was always accompanied by its effects and fruits in the elect in Christ. These included reconciliation, adoption, sanctification and repentance or good works, which were the evidences of true faith.[44]

This unilateral stress or insistence on the priority of grace, and the insistence of faith and good works as the gift of God's grace, did not, however, mute the idea of mutuality or conditionality in the theology of the covenant as expounded by Fenner and Cartwright. The covenant of God involved both 'the action promised by God' and 'the

reciprocal action promised by man'. Fenner spelt out these actions in terms of mutual conditions: 'Actio Dei stipulantis, est primum membrum *foederis*, quo deus stipulatur se fore hominibus in Deum, ad benedictionem vitae, se conditionem annexam impletam habuerint... Actio hominis stipulationem recipientis, est secundum membrum *foederis*, quo homo recipit se fore Deo in populum ad benedictionem vitae, prout conditionem annexam impletam habuerit.'[45] This conditionality extended to both the covenant of works and the covenant of grace.

Cartwright wrote that the covenant of works, or the law, preceded the covenant of grace, because the righteousness of the law, or the moral law, was written in the hearts of Adam and Eve at the beginning: 'The lawe...was given to Adam befor his faule'. The condition or duties required of Adam in his integrity for the sustaining of the covenantal relationship was perfect obedience to the summe of the law, which meant keeping all the commandments 'boothe in thought woord and deede'.[46]

By saying that the covenant of grace was subsequent to the covenant of works, Cartwright was not implying that it was thereby inferior, or just some kind of afterthought or adjunct to the covenant of works. As in the works of all covenantal theologians, the emphasis on the eternal nature of the work of the Mediator of the covenant precluded such a conclusion. It was clearly the revelation or execution of the covenant of grace to which he referred, since during the Edenic administration 'the promise of grace was hid in God'.[47]

The conditions of the covenant of works continued after the fall and after its verbalization at Sinai, as did the promise of life annexed to it.[48] But the fall made a difference. Adam's disobedience to the law and the ensuing corruption of human nature in him meant that neither he nor his posterity were ever again capable of keeping the law and obtaining the blessing promised in that

way. This meant that henceforth 'the covenant of works cannot through the infirmitie of our flesh give life unto any'. Man no longer had the power to move in the direction of, or incline himself to do, the will of God.[49] This naturally raised the question as to why the terms of the covenant of works should be republished or why it should continue to be called a covenant when it could no longer reconcile or join those at variance. The answer to these questions was simply in the relationship in which the covenant of works now stood to the covenant of grace. 'It doth make way to reconciliation by another covenant', said Cartwright, meaning that the law or the covenant of works was no longer given to justify or give life, but to drive men to Christ in order to be reconciled through faith in the promise of grace, and to continue to instruct them in the understanding of God's will and requirements.[50]

Fenner made the same point: 'The lawe was given to the Iewes, and us, not onely to bring us unto Christ, but also to allure and instruct us to obedience, when Christ is received'.[51] Its republication was necessary because of the decay of its natural inscription in the hearts of men due to sin.[52] The natural law and the decalogue were one and the same. When *Quilibet* suggested that Moses' law was 'a plaine corruption of the law natural', Fenner responded, 'Wee may with greater probabilitie thinke that the Lord of heaven discerning the law, which hee had imprinted in the heart of man, to bee defaced through the defection of *Adam*, and after by an irrespective and dislimited carriage of life in his descendents, did out of wisdome to prevent the total abolition thereof, and out of mercie to reclaime his people to a course of dutie, resolve upon a new and second impression of the said law: which upon mount Sinai hee accordingly performed'.[53] This statement is clear evidence of how wrong is the alleged difference between Cartwright and Fenner, which suggested that Fenner did not site the covenant of works in the prelapsarian arrangement,

but related it only to the law as given at Sinai.[54]

The republication of the law of nature was for Fenner as well as Cartwright a reiteration of the covenant of works, the conditions and stipulations of which bound the Jewish people not only through the moral law but also through the added rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic tradition.[55] But the covenant had respect to more than just legal and ceremonial obedience; it was a sign pointing to Christ. The Jewish people did not keep it after Sinai any more than those people before kept the natural law when they considered it only with respect to works. But when it was considered as intended, in as far as it respected the promise of grace through faith, it brought the benefits of Christ's death in the new covenant. Faith was only set against the law in as far as 'the law is performed in works only'.[56]

But not only was the covenant of works conditional in the thought of Fenner and Cartwright, so too was the covenant of grace. The unilateral emphasis on grace did not exclude a bilateral element. Cartwright's simple answer to the question in the *Small Catechisme*, 'What is the covenant of grace?' was 'Beleeve in Jesus Chryst and you shallt be saved'.[57] In response to the same question, the condition was stated more explicitly in his larger catechetical work, 'That God will give us life everlasting through Christ, *if we beleeve in him*'.[58] Again to the question, 'Is there no Remedie for mankynd agaynst everlasting deathe?', he replied, 'Yes, for all such of of [sic] mankynd as growe ashamed of theyr corruptyons and synns And Repent, and beleeve the holly covenantes and promyses of almyghty god and gloreous gospell of Christ Jesus'. He went on to affirm that there was no other remedy for those who refuse to repent and believe, but at the same time he reaffirmed that the power to repent and believe did not reside in mankind but 'must proceed from God who hath made all thynges to his own glory'.[59]

Fenner's description of 'the covenant of the promise of grace' was similar: 'It is a covenant (a) concerning Christ and the blessings prominent (*extante*) in him, graciously promised through grace. (b) wherein is the condition, if Christ is received', that is, by faith.[60] In the context of the full exposition of faith in Fenner and Cartwright the condition could only be a consequent condition, and had no meritorious value whatsoever. The action of faith was inspired and gifted by the Holy Spirit, who brought sorrow for sin, witnessed to the adoption of believers into God's family, and united them with Christ. Faith was inseparable from its effects which provided evidence of its true nature.[61]

These effects of faith contributed to the assurance of faith and election. Fenner in one place spoke of adoption, or rather the witness of the Spirit of adoption as bringing assurance of being God's sons.[62] Cartwright emphasized that assurance was to be found 'in the fruits of the grace of God'. He said, 'Men stumble and breake their neckes in the matter of election', because they insisted on going 'to the *University of Election*, before they have been at the *Grammar-Schoole of Calling* and *Sanctification*'. This was not to say that work was necessary to prove election, but that sanctification was the inevitable outcome of the grace of God and of true faith.[63]

As a consequence Fenner and Cartwright had a strong insistence on the necessity of obedience and good works as the essential and inevitable fruits of true faith in the elect. Again this was devoid of any idea of merit, for 'good works and the grace in us are no causes of our salvation or election principall or secondarie, but effects'.[64] Nevertheless, 'the Gospell...teacheth the carefull indeavour of all good workes of the law..., between the calling, and the reward of life everlasting there must be good workes, without which the faith of the Gospell which men professe is argued to be a vain and a

dead faith'.[65]

There were two parts to the covenant of grace, according to Cartwright: 'the one is the covenant that God makes with us; the other is the covenant that we make with God', that is, that God would be the God of his people and that they would walk with him.[66] The entire performance of the covenant, however, depended on Christ the Son of God and his mediatorial work.[67] It was through Christ's obedience to the law and his righteousness imputed to men that they were freely justified and 'restored to a better righteousness that ever we had in Adam'.[68] But justification was inseparable from sanctification - 'they go together, and as it were hand in hand'. No sooner was someone make righteous by imputation, than they were made holy in some respect.[69]

The resulting good works of the believer were in no sense acceptable for justification, nor could they merit any reward, as they always came short through imperfection and were never wholly for God's glory and the good of others. Nevertheless they were still 'of some account before God', because through Christ's work their pollution and deficiency was removed.[70] Believers, therefore, were encouraged by all the benefits of salvation and by the need to prepare for the coming of Christ to engage and perservere in good works, and to attend to the means of their being effected in their lives, that is, through the word and the Spirit.[71] In this way they would approve themselves as 'good ground' hearers of the word by the good fruits produced.[72] Rewards were promised, and would be given according to works, 'yet not received for workes', but bestowed only from grace.[73] The guide and rule for good works in the regenerate was the continuing validity of the moral law of God.[74]

Fenner had the same emphasis on justified men living godly or sanctified lives, engaged in mortifying sin and living to righteousness. They were to study to do this

according to the will of God.[75] Those who were partakers of the undeserved gift of justification 'he setteth them forth by fruits', that is, that they love God and keep his commandments. This new obedience, however, was never perfect in this life, and no matter how well it was performed it was but the fulfilling of duty, and did not merit any reward: 'wee...had done but our dutie, and as if our father leave us no patrimony, are we lesse bound to doe our dutie? So if the Lord had not bounde himself by his covenant, which came from his free and undeserved goodness, could we have claimed anything by fulfilling, because we did but our duty, for the mercie of creating us in great dignitie, according to his own likeness and righteousness'.[76]

Participation in the administration of the sacraments (visible words), as an extension of attending to the preaching of the Word, also reflected the mutuality of the covenant. They not only sealed the promises of God to his people, but 'also our promise unto God, that we take him only for our God and Redeemer, whom by faith alone wee rest upon, and whom we will obey'.[77] The believer must come to the sacraments with knowledge and feeling, able to 'understand the covenant of grace, which God in Christ hath made with the sonnes of men: and then, that by faith he be able to applie the same to himselfe'.[78] In the Lord's supper both the promise of God and the responsibility of the worshippers were equally stressed[79]

It was the same with baptism. Parents were responsible for putting their baptized children in remembrance of their duty and to catechize and instruct them in the ways of the Lord.[80] And as well as 'the parents who offer their children, in regarde of the covenant of God *made to them and their seed*, the minister also 'ought to have faith in this work', and 'the church even with their praiers to God, and witnessing, do work with faith'.[81] But the responsibility of the parents in

observing the conditions of the covenant was paramount. Baptism was not of the essence of salvation, as to mean the damnation of those wanting it, but it was not to be neglected, because it sealed that which faith laid hold of. This was to distinguish between the truth of the covenant and the sacrament which was its seal.[92] It was 'God's ordinance and a seale of his covenant', and of union with Christ. Therefore, to turn from it or to despise it was a serious matter because it was to transgress the law of God in 'disobeying this holy bond', and 'because by the father's sin, disannulling the covenant by idolatrie, the child falleth out of the same, and continuing in that fall, is punished iustly for his own sin and his father's both'.[93]

The mutual nature of the covenant of grace was also reflected in the repeated references to union with Christ. Cartwright considered that in the covenant of grace it was not unreasonable that Christ's righteousness should be imputed to his people for justification since 'we have a more strict coniunction in the Spirit with him, then ever wee had in nature with Adam'. Just as all men were condemned in their union with Adam, so all men redeemed in Christ, were redeemed in their union with Christ.[94] This covenantal union was effected in the believer's life by the sovereign, regenerating and engrafting work of the Holy Spirit. Baptism especially was the sign or seal of this secret work of God's Spirit, when, like new plants, they were ingrafted and incorporated into Christ and thus united with him and with his church.[95]

The mutuality of the covenant with respect to baptism has already been pointed out, but the continual use of the marriage metaphor needs to be noted in relation to union with Christ. Fenner followed Beza in maintaining the mutuality of the relationship between Christ and his spouse as typified in the *Song of Songs*.[96] He frequently described human marriage as a 'joyning...by the covenant of

God'.[87] And this paralleled the mutual relationship between God and his covenanted people. The requirements of the second commandment in the decalogue were portrayed as the duty of a spouse to her husband, in loving, desiring, delighting in, and honouring the Lord alone. The Lord's 'jealousy' was likened to the jealousy in a marriage relationship where neither partner could abide affection being given to another: '*For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God*...even then being joyned unto them by my merciful covenant, as a husband to a wife'.[88]

Finally, it is abundantly clear from the works of Fenner and Cartwright that the unity and continuity of the eternal covenant of grace was in no way threatened by their teaching on the covenant of works. The latter was not set up in opposition to the former. After the fall of man salvation could only be through the covenant of grace, and the continuing validity of the covenant of works lay in its creative obligation, but supremely in its service to the covenant of grace. Christ's work as the Mediator of the covenant was interpreted as a law-work, fulfilling all the requirements of the covenant of works and providing salvation for all the faithful in all ages.[89]

The Old Testament was 'the covenant of God, under shadowes to give life everlasting by faith in Christ that was to come', while the New Testament was 'the covenant of God without shadowes to give life everlasting by faith in Christ that is come...they be in substance the same, but in maner they differ'.[90] Since God instituted the covenant of grace after the fall, it would be to question his wisdom for anyone to seek righteousness by the covenant of works since that time.[91] The fathers in the Old Testament were justified by faith and were made partakers of the work of the Holy Spirit as well as New Testament believers. They had circumcision of heart as well as of body.[92] The power of Christ's blood and sacrifice was such that 'it reacheth to all the times before, it is not onely belonging to them

that come after, but to *Adam* and the Fathers, and therefore it is said that the death of our Saviour Christ reacheth to the former sinnes'.[93]

The sacraments of the Old Testament were seals and signs of the eternal covenant of grace in Christ just as baptism and the Lord's Supper were in the New. The covenant of grace was clearly propounded to Abraham and confirmed in the sacrament of circumcision.[94] After the liberation from Egypt, the passover also became a sacrament of the same covenant. Even the extraordinary sacrament of baptism in the Red Sea signified Christ.[95]

These early Puritans continued the Reformed view of an external and internal administration of the covenant in Old Testament times just as there was in the New Testament church. 'Two visible and distinct churches' existed between the sons of God and the sons of men back in the early chapters of the book of Genesis. Then a 'public act and ordinance was introduced by God as 'a badge of distinction' between Jew and Gentile: 'For the covenant made with his people, which could not bee unknowne even to the inconfederate, he added circumcision as it were the broade seale of his favour, and to be likewise a notorious and distinguent marke of his churche'.[96]

The twin administration of the covenant continued even after Abraham. The example of Jacob and Esau demonstrated that some received only the external administration, while others received both the external and the internal, spiritual benefits.[97] In children there was always 'some shew of doubt', with the possibility of those who had received the external administration of the covenant growing up to repudiate the internal administration. But children of the faithful were still to be received and treated as being 'within the covenant of God... Christ and his benefits in this covenant of grace doth belong unto them', so that when they would come to maturity it would be applied by faith. Or should they fail to survive infancy,

parents could still be comforted by the knowledge that the regenerating work of God's Spirit could be sovereignly wrought in them through 'the grace of the covenant'.[98]

In an earlier chapter, in relation to the vexed question of church government, Cartwright's experiences were referred to as representing 'the nexus between English Puritanism and the Continental Reformation'.[99] The close association of Cartwright and Fenner with the major Reformed centres in Europe, together with their faithful adherence to the fundamental doctrines of the leading theologians of the Reformed schools, meant that in a special sense they also constituted a strong theological bridge between the Reformed writers on the Continent and mainstream English Puritanism. No where was this more evident than in their theology of the covenant.

Fenner and Cartwright maintained the unity of the covenant of grace in the Old Testament and the New, making clear the differences in administration. Their sacramental theology was firmly rooted in the covenant, and related to the idea of covenantal union with Christ which was a strong feature of Reformed theology. In viewing the law of God as a revelation of God's will and righteousness first made known in creation to Adam, they built upon a foundation that had been well laid in Geneva and Zurich. The Edenic arrangement had already been referred to in covenantal terms, and the more precise definition which they gave to it, reflected more the descriptive direction already taken by Calvin and Beza, rather than a Ramist invention. Fenner is of particular importance in that he was the first to use the term *foedus operum*, but this was not to introduce a new concept; it merely gave a definitive title to an idea that was already present in Reformed theology and basic to its exposition of the law of God in relation to the sin of man and the work of Christ as Mediator of the eternal covenant.

NOTES: Chapter Sixteen

1 Trinterud, 'The Origins', 37.

2 Greaves, 'English Puritanism', 21.

3 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.278-279; Priebe, 'The Covenant Theology of William Perkins', 255; cf.87.

4 Miller, 'The Marrow', 60; Greaves, *op.cit.*, 32.

5 Trinterud, *op.cit.*, 48-49; Møller, 'The Beginnings' 58; Greaves, *op.cit.*, 29, 32; Wilcox, 'New England Covenant Theology',36-39; McKee, 'Early English Puritanism' 41ff; Oki, 'Ethics', 78; Ishbell, 'The Origin' 35-37; McGiffert, 'Grace and Works', 493-495.

6 Neal, *History of the Puritans*, 1.316-317; Brook, *Lives of the Puritans*, 1.372-396 ; *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Cartwright D.D.*, 40,221-222,310 ; Strype, *Life of Whitgift*, 1.245-255,271-277,337; P.Heylen, *Aerius Redivivus: or the History of Presbyterians...From the year 1536, to the year 1647*, (Oxford 1670), 290; W. Tarbutt, *Annals of Cranbrook Church* (London 1875), 14-15; C.H. and T. Cooper, ed. *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, 3 vols. (Cambridge 1858-1913), 2.72; R. Bayne, 'Fenner', *DNB*, 18.317-319; Scott Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright*, 8,229,272-279,318,334-335; Peel, ed. *The Seconde Parte of a register*, 1.238,240-241,296; 2.262. Among those who have commented on Fenner's covenantal theology are: W.G. Wilcox, 'New England Covenant Theology: Its English Precursors and Early American Exponents. PhD Thesis (Duke University 1959), 36-39; Letham, 'Saving Faith', 265-269; Ishbell, 'The Origin', 35-36; McGiffert, 'Grace and Works', 492-495. For works on Cartwright see *infra*, 1.33 n.41.

7 Fenner, *An Answer unto the Confutation of Iohn Nichols his Recantation* (London 1583); *A Counter-Poyson Modestly Written for the time* (London n.d.); *A Defence of the Reason of the Counter-Poyson, for the maintenance of the Eldership* (1586); *A Defence of the godlie Ministers, against the Slaunders of D. Bridges* ([Middleburgh] 1587); *An Antiquodlibet or an advertisement to beware of secular priests* (Middleburgh 1602). Two other tracts attributed to Fenner are of doubtful authorship: *A Defence of the Ecclesiastical Discipline ordayned of God to be used in his Church* (1588), was more likely the work of Walter Travers, to whom it was attributed by Bancroft in his *Survay of the pretended Holy Discipline*, 372, 376, 423; and *An Humble Motion with Submission unto the Right Honorable L.L. of His Maiesties Privie Counsell. Wherein is laid open to be considered, how necessarie it was for the good of this lande... that Ecclesticall discipline were reformed after*

the worde of God (1590), could well be Isaac Penry's, alias Martin Marprelate (Strype, *Whitgift* 348.)

8 *The Artes of Logicke and Rethorike plainelie set foorth in the English tounge, easie to be learned and practised* (1584).

9 *The Song of Songs, that is, the Most Excellent Song which was Solomons, translated out of the Hebrue into Englishe meeter* (Middleburgh 1587).

10 *The Groundes of Religion necessarie to be knowen of every one that may be admitted to the Supper of the Lord. Plainly set downe in Questions and Answers* (Middleburgh 1587); *Certain Godly and Learned Treatises* (Edinburgh 1592), containing six tracts: 'The Order of Housholde methodicallie described out of the word of God', (1-62); 'The Resolution and Interpretation of the Lord's Prayer', (63-71); 'The Epistle to Philemon', (71-79); 'A Short and Plaine Table, orderly disposing the Principles of Religion, and first, of the first Table of the Law, whereby we may examine ourselves', (81-117); 'The Whole Doctrine of the Sacraments, plainlie and fullie set downe and declared out of the word of God', (118-180); 'A Short and Profitable Treatise of Lawful and Unlawful Recreations, and of the Right Use and Abuse of those that are Lawfull', (182-192).

11 *Sacra theologia* ([Geneva] 1604). Quotations in the text are from this later edition, although earlier editions were consulted. Another work *The Sacred Doctrine of Divinitie, Gathered out of the Worde of God. Togither with an explication of the Lordes Prayer* (1599), carries Fenner's name on the title page, but the Preface, dated 1st January, 1589, declares that it was the work of a gentleman who had not seen Fenner's book before he wrote it. Wilcox, 'New England Covenant Theology', 14, erronously attributed it to Fenner as 'an English condensation' of the *Sacra Theologia*. Weir, '*Foedus Naturale*', 173-174, did likewise. The true author was probably Henry Finch, see W.R. Prest, 'The Art of Law and the Law of God: Sir Henry Finch (1558-1625)', *Puritans and Revolution*, eds. D. Pennington and K. Thomas, (Oxford, 1978), 102-108.

12 *Sacra theol.*, 49.

13 Cartwright,'A Short Catechisme', *Cartwrightiana*, 159; *Christian Religion, Substantially, methodicallie, plainlie, and profitablie treatised* (London 1619), 64-65, 123-124. A copy of this work in Glasgow University Library is wrongly listed in the *STC* as a second edition. It is definitely an original edition (p315 and pp141-159 omitted), with the title page and preface from a 1616 edition attached. See C.R. Gillett, ed. *Catalogue of the McAlpin Collection on British History and Theology*, 5 vols. (New York 1927), 1.243,289

14 Fenner, *Song of Songs*, 5a-8a; Preface 'To the Christian Reader'.

15 *An Answer*, 64-66; *Song of Songs*, 39a, 41a; cf. Beza. *infra*, 2.62ff; 104 n.79.

16 C. Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, 5 vols. (Geneva 1900-1934), 1.107-108, 119, 316, 532; Scott-Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright*, 46-54; Peel, ed. *Cartwrightiana* 76, 105.

17 Cartwright, 'Preface' *A Confutation of the Rhemists Translation*, ([Leiden] 1618), A2; *Cartwrightiana*, 2, 4; Brook, *Life of Cartwright*, 460; Scott-Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright*, 48; cf. 54, 56, 57, 200, and Heylen, *Aerius Redivivus*, 298.

18 J. Polyander, 'Praefatio', in Cartwright, *Commentii succincti et dilucide in Proverba Solomonis*, (Lugduni 1611), 'In quorum censu si quis post Calvinum, Bezam...recentiorum interpretum principes est collocandus, is est Thomas Cartwrightus Anglus Warwicensus, S.Theologiae quondam Professor in Academia Cantabrigiensi'; cf. Brook, *op.cit.*, 460.

19 Fenner, *A Defence*, 54; cf.102.

20 *An Answer*, 7.

21 Heylen, *op.cit.*, 286.

22 Scott Pearson, *op.cit.*, 370, cf. 400,409.

23 G. Toepke, *Die Matrikel der Universität Heidelberg von 1386 bis 1662*, 3 vols. (1884-1893), 2.69; Scott-Pearson, *op.cit.*, 130-154.

24 Fenner, *Sacra theol.*, 1; cf. Ramus, *Commentariorum*, 6.

25 *Ibid.*; cf. Ramus, *op.cit.*, 10.

26 Cartwright, *Harmonia Evangelica Commentario Analytico, Metaphrastico, Practico, Illustrata* (Lugduni 1647), 39-42.

27 Fenner, *Sacra theol.*, 5b 'Praedestinatione est decretum Dei, de aeterna precipuarum creaturarum salute et condemnatine'.

28 *Ibid.*, 3a, 6a.

29 *The Groundes*, 6.

30 *Sacra theol.*, 5b, 6aff, 39b. The charge that Fenner started with Calvin and then turned to Beza in making this distinction is pointless since it was found in both Calvin and Beza; *contra* Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.267.

31 Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 15-17.

32 *Ibid.*, 216-217; cf. 17ff, 169.

33 *Confutation of Rhemists*, Rom. 9:11 (355,357); cf. *Christian Rel.*, 5-6, 16.

34 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 28, asserts this on the basis of the absence of mention of Christ in the brief definition of predestination in *Sacra theologia.* (see n.22.)

35 Cartwright, *A Commentary upon the Epistle of Saint Paule written to the Colossians* (London 1612), 1:24-29 (84-86); 1:21-22 (75-76).

36 Fenner, *Sacra theol.*, 61a-62b.

37 *Ibid.*, 62a-b, 51a '*Ecclesia Dei* est coetus eorum qui sunt in *Christo*'; *The Groundes*, 3; *The Whole Doctrine*, 120.

38 Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 168-175; cf. Fenner, *The Groundes*, 5.

39 Fenner, *The Whole Doctrine*, 123; cf. 158.

40 *Ibid.*, 118, 120; cf. *Sacra theol.*, public administration is distinguished from true sacramental union, 104a, 127aff; Cartwright, *Coloss.*, 2:10-13(130-131).

41 *Ibid.*, 136-137, 138; cf. *Sacra theol.*, 105a-b; 206b-210b; Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 176 'Christ is offered to all, and exhibited to the faithful, for the strengthening of faith in the eternal covenant'.

42 *The Groundes*, 6; Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 215.

43 Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 174; *Small Cat.*, 169.

44 *Ibid.*, 174-175; *Small Cat.*, 169; Fenner, *The Groundes* 4; *Sacra theol.*, 62a-63b 'Sanctificationem respiciens fructus, est μετανοίας donum, cordibus per fidem insusum'.

45 Fenner, *Sacra Theol.*, 48a-b.

46 Cartwright, *Small Cat.*, 159; *Christian Rel.*, 25-26, 68-69; cf. Fenner, *Sacra theol.*, 18a-21a, 48b '*Operum foedus*, est *foedus* ubi conditio annexa est, perfecta obedientia.'

47 *Christian Rel.*, 68. This kind of conclusion has been drawn by critics of covenantal theology; see Rolston, *John Calvin*, 14, 17, 22 'Grace...is a second resort', 63-64, 114-115; 'Responsible Man', 136; and J.B. Torrance's continual complaint that the covenantal scheme is built on the priority of law over grace, in 'Covenant Concept' 239-240; 'Calvin and Puritanism', 271-272; 'The Incarnation', 89-90; 'Strengths and Weaknesses', 49; 'Unconditional Freeness', 8-10; cf. also T.F. Torrance, *The School of Faith*, lv.

48 Fenner, *A Short...Table*, 82-85.

49 Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 123-124, 161-162; *Coloss.*, 1:9-11 (36); *Small Cat.*, 172; *A Confutation*, Rom. 2:29 (335); Fenner, *The Groundes*, 1-2; *Sacra theol.*, 39bff.

50 *Ibid.*, 124-125, 65-69.

51 Fenner, *A Short...Table*, 89, 81, 86-87, 113; cf. Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 68.

52 Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 53.

53 Fenner, *An Antiquodlibet*, 15-16.

54 McGiffert, *op.cit.*, 494-495; Møller, *op.cit.*, 61-62.

55 *Sacra theol.*, 156a-b 'Lex *Mosaica*, est a Deo lata, de sanctitate et ceremoniis: ut sit foederis cum Iudaeis icti annexa conditio per Mosen tradita.

Foedus cum Iudaeis ictum, est foedus operum, quo Deus stipulatur Iudaeos fore ipsi peculium prae omnibus populis, se permanserint in omnibus quae scripta sunt in libro legis.

Sanctionem praecedentia, sunt inter Deus et populum stipulantem, et stipulationem recipientem: de conditionibus consilia et sermones...

Dei, sunt beneficia proponentis, et foederis stipulationem et conditiones offerentis'.

56 *Ibid.*, 160b 'Hoc autem *obsignabat* foedus vetus; quatenus operum spectabat foedus, populo nihil nisi reatum et poenas conciliaturum: quatenus autem fidei gratuitum respiciebat, omnia non in seipsis, sed in Christo foedus illud morte sanctiente tanquam testamentum rediturum per fidem'; Cartwright, *A Confutation*, Gal.3:7 (473).

57 Cartwright, *Small Cat.*, 166.

58 *Christian Rel.*, 124 (itals. mine).

59 *Small Cat.*, 172.

60 Fenner, *Sacra theol.*, 49a '*Foedus* gratuitae promissionis, est *foedus* (a) de *Christo* et ευλογια in ipso extante, gratuito promissis. (b) ubi conditio est, si recipiatur *Christus*.'

61 *Ibid.*, 62b-63b.

62 *Ibid.*, 63a.

63 Cartwright, *Coloss.*, 3:12-16 (193).

64 *A Confutation*, Rom. 9:16 (359); *Coloss.*, 1:4 (22).

65 *Ibid.*, Rom. 2:4 (331).

66 *Christian Rel.*, 125.

67 *Ibid.*, 125ff.

68 *Ibid.*, 163; cf.*Small Cat.*, 167.

69 *Ibid.*, 164-165.

70 *Ibid.*, 165-166.

71 *Ibid.*, 167-172,269-309; cf. *Small Cat.*, 169,172-173.

72 *Ibid.*, 175; cf. *Coloss.*, 1:2-5 (14).

73 *Ibid.*, 315.

74 *Small Cat.*, 166.

75 Fenner, *The Groundes*, 4; *A Short...Table*, 182-192.

76 *A Short...Table*, 102-103.

77 Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 178.

78 *Ibid.*, 179-190.

79 *Ibid.*, 185-194; Fenner, *Sacra theol.*, 104aff.

80 *Ibid.*, 184-185.

81 Fenner, *The Whole Doctrine*, 120.

82 Cartwright, *Coloss.*, 2:10-13(135-136); *A Confutation*, Rom.2:26 (334), 7:6 (349); *Christian Rel.*, 178, 182-183.

83 Fenner, *A Short...Table*, 101.

84 Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 162; *Coloss.*, 1:12-14 (52)

85 *Ibid.*, 183, cf. 181.

86 Fenner, *Song of Songs*, 39a; cf. Beza, *infra*, 2.81.

87 *The Order of the Housholde*, 32, 38-39; *Sacra theol.*, 29a 'Coniugium, est ex Dei foedere unius viri et mulie ris coniunctio, ut sint una caro, ad alterius vitae terminum'.

88 *A Short...Table*, 100; This theme became very widespread in theological literature during the seventeenth century, eg. T. Drake, *The Lamb's Spouse or the Heavenly Bride. a theologicall discourse wherein the contract betwixt Christ and the Church...is plainly and profitably, with the particular uses, set forth' (London 1608); J. Durham, Clavis Cantici*, (Edinburgh, 1668).

89 Cartwright, *Christian Rel.*, 64-65; *A Confutation*, Gal. 3:13 (473-474); Fenner, *Sacra theol.*, 51a-63b.

90 *Ibid.*, 125; cf. 177.

91 *Ibid.*, 124.

92 *A Confutation*, Heb. 8:10 (623), cf. 9:8 (624); *Colossians*, 2:11-13 (128).

93 *Colossians*, 1:12-14 (51-52).

94 Fenner, *Sacra theol.*, 121b-125a.

95 *Ibid.*, 121b-129b (not 229, irr. pag.).

96 *An Antiquodlibet*, 21; cf. *Sacra theol.*, 63b-64a.

97 *Sacra theol.*, 121bff, 125b.

98 *The Whole Doctrine*, 138; cf. *Sacra theol.*, 105b; Cartwright, *Christian Rel..*, 184-185.

99 Scott-Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright*, 409.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Puritan Stream: William Perkins

William Perkins (1558-1602) was one of the most prolific and influential writers amongst the Puritans. 'The mastermind of Puritanism,' he has been called.[1] Perkins was a fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, having matriculated there in 1577, and lectured in Great St. Andrew's until 1594. His preaching had a profound impact on life at Cambridge and was eagerly attended by lecturers and students alike. Successors regarded his concern for an intensely practically application of Reformed doctrine and for pastoral effectiveness as a pattern to emulate.[2]

But Perkins' pen perhaps more than the pulpit enhanced and widened his reputation. For half a century his works through numerous editions were widely read not only in the home countries, but on the Continent and in New England, aided by translations into Latin, Dutch, Spanish, Welsh, and Irish, and 'he continued to be studied throughout the seventeenth century as an authority but little inferior to Hooker and Calvin'.[3] Those especially indebted to him included the generation of divines who comprised the Westminster Assembly, and in particular Ussher and Ball whose writings contributed so much to the *Confession of Faith.*[4]

Perkins' essential Calvinism, until recently, has never been seriously disputed. The pattern of the Genevan Reformer's thought is everywhere stamped upon his work. Even Perry Miller who virtually attributed to Perkins and his disciples a covenantal theology which he imagined would make Calvin shudder, had to admit that he added no new doctrines to theology, and was 'in every respect a meticulously sound and orthodox Calvinist'.[5] Perkins' appreciation of Beza was also frequently acknowledged in

his writings. For example, he appended a short treatise from Beza's debate with Andreas to his *Armilla Aurea*.[6] It is however probably an exaggeration to say that 'his chief mentor was Beza' on the ground that they used similar charts to illustrate the order of salvation.[7] Similarity there certainly was, but the claim that Perkins' chart 'almost exactly mirrored Beza's' *Tabula* requires qualification in the light of Muller's examination of their structure and content.[8]

Again, the resemblance of *Armilla Aurea* to Fenner's *Sacra Theologia* has not been overlooked.[9] Nor is evidence of Perkins' acquaintance with the Heidelberg divines lacking; the most notable example being the way in which his *Exposition of the Symbole* followed the footsteps of Olevianus in using the covenant as a major interpretive principle in expounding the corpus of Christian doctrine enshrined in the Apostles' Creed.[10] This work also had 'much in common with Ursinus' *Doctrinae christianae Compendium*'.[11] Perkins is also another example of the Reformed utilization of philosophical and methodological concepts which could serve as tools for the furtherance of the truth. Consequently Aristotelian and Ramean categories occur continually throughout his works without in any way distorting or changing the nature and content of his theology.[12]

Unity of the Covenant

McGiffert maintained that Perkins 'merely glanced at the old thesis of unity and continuity' and was able to 'take for granted what Calvin had undertaken to prove'.[13] But Perkins paused sufficiently in most of his major works to demonstrate that he considered the unity of the covenant to be of real importance and not just something to take for granted. In *A Golden Chaine*, when discussing the incarnation and offices of Christ who was the substance of the covenant, he began by underlining three things which

were manifested by Christ's birth under the law and his subjection to the rites of circumcision and baptism. One was that the entire efficiency of these sacraments wholly depended on Christ. The second was 'that hee was the Mediatour of mankind, both before and under the law, as also under grace', and thirdly, 'That hee is the knot and bond of both covenants'.[14] Perkins followed the traditional description of the covenant of grace in terms of unity of substance and diversity of administration: 'The covenant, albeit it be one in substance, yet it is distinguished into the olde and newe testament'. The old, he explained, prefigured in types and shadows the Christ who was to come and be established, while in the new his appearing in the flesh was declared in the gospel.'[15]

Again, in the *Exposition of the Symbole*, Perkins referred to 'the tenour of the words of the covenant at the beginning' which made a distinction between men: 'We can not say that every man hath beene and now is in the covenant, but onely that litle part of mankind, which in all ages hath bin the church of God and hath by faith embraced the covenant'. The 'beginning' here was not with Christ's coming, or Moses' publication of the law, or with Abraham's circumcision, but was taken back to the first promise concerning the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. It was first revealed to Adam and Eve, manifested in the acceptance of Abel and the rejection of Cain, and then traced through the subsequent history of God's people.'[16]

Commenting on Gal.1:6-7, Perkins made the unequivocal statement that 'there is but one Gospell, one in number and no more. For there is but one way of salvation through Christ, whereby all the Elect are saved, from the beginning of the worlde to the ende'.[17] Further on he added, 'The people of the old Testament, were...heires as well as we, and therefore they had right to all the blessings of God. The difference betweene us and them, is only in the maner

which God used in dispensing the foresaide blessings to us'.[18] In the *Exposition of Jude* the spouse of Christ was declared to be 'one onely indeede' in all ages, distinguished only in respect of time and place.[19]

It was however in his commentary on Hebrews 11, entitled *A Cloud of Faithful Witnesses*, that Perkins did more than 'merely glance' at the question of unity and continuity. The entire book, a fairly substantial volume, was devoted to the theme, as could be expected. The faith celebrated in the chapter was none other than justifying faith, 'wrought by the holy Ghost in the hearts of those that are effectually called, concerning the reconciliation and salvation by Christ'. The 'auncient beleeving Israelites' partook of the same spiritual nourishment as the later church, and that food and drink was Christ.[19] Believing in Christ, the Old Testament saints had their sins laid on Christ, and had his holiness, obedience to the law, and satisfaction of divine justice imputed to them, so that they were declared righteous and approved by God through their faith.[20]

Perkins was in no doubt about where this grace was first manifested. Writing of Cain and Abel, he said, 'When their parents *Adam* and *Eve* had fallen, God gave them (of his infinite goodness) a covenant of grace...we doubt not that our first parents received this covenant, and beleeved the promise'. In turn they taught the duties of the covenant to their children.[21] And this same covenant of grace, given first to Adam and Eve 'did God renue and revive with his Church from time to time in all ages to this day'.[22] For example, when Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, it was 'that hee might receive them into his family and into the covenant' in the way that Isaac had called him into the covenant and blessed him, and in the way Joseph was to repeat the blessing 'so that he might have his sonnes within the covenant'.[23]

As with his Reformed predecessors the sacraments

figured largely in Perkins' treatment of the unity of the covenant. Continuing the above quotation on Heb. 11:40, he made this clear: 'Both circumcision and the Passover were seales of this covenant; as well as our Sacraments bee: so that in substance they differ not; the free gift of grace in Christ belonged to them as well as unto us. The beleeving Iewes in the sacramentes did eate the same spiritual meate and drinke the same spiritual drinke with us: and beleevers then obtained the same eternall life that wee doe by faith. And yet if we regard the manner of administering the covenant of grace in Gods Church, unto the people of God; herein dothe the church of the newe Testament farre surpasse the church of God in the olde'.

Perkins then made five observations concerning the limitations of the old in relation to the new. In the Old Testament the spiritual and temporal blessings were mingled together; the revelation of Christ was more obscure in the ceremonies, rites and types; the law was more prominent in the knowledge and worship of the people; the revelation of the old was largely confined to one nation and people; and finally in the old Christ was yet to come and be established.[24]

The Law and the Covenant

Over against the unity of the covenant in Perkins' works was the bipartite nature of the covenant. He spoke repeatedly and specifically of a covenant of works as well as the covenant of grace. Having explained that 'Gods covenant is his contract with man concerning the obtaining of life eternall, upon a certen condition', Perkins went on to say, 'there are two kindes of this covenant', and he carefully defined them: 'The covenant of workes, is Gods covenant, made with condition of perfect obedience, and is expressed in the morall law'. The decalogue, he added was an abridgement of the moral law and of the covenant of works.[25] On the other hand, 'The covenant of grace is

that whereby God freely promising Christ, and his benefits, exacteth againe of man, that hee would by faith receive Christ, and repent of his sinnes'.[26]

Perkins followed the traditional division of the law into moral, ceremonial and judicial categories.[27] He had no misgivings about identifying the moral law with the covenant of works or insisting that eternal life could be had upon the perfect fulfilling of its precepts.[28] But he was equally under no illusion as to man's ability to do just that.[29] For fallen man, the covenant of works could never be a covenant of life, securing or maintaining a relationship between God and man.

The question as to when the covenant of works was first stated is of importance in the study of Perkins' thought. Was it simply a hypothetical promise of life on impossible conditions for fallen creatures? Or was there a time when its stipulations were within the realm of possibility for mankind? It has been claimed that Perkins 'did not pin the covenant of works to Creation but kept it cinched to the Decalogue', thereby bringing about the 'transvaluation of the law from command to contract'.[30] But if as McGiffert asserted, Perkins held that 'all men at all times' were presumed to be bound by this contract and held stiffly to its consequences, it is difficult to imagine how he could have considered this to be so when the decalogue was not given until the time of Moses and was largely confined in verbal form to Israel.

Priebe had taken a similar position twenty-five years earlier. He too maintained that Perkins referred the covenant of works only to the Mosaiac law 'and not to the primitive laws printed on the heart of Adam at creation'. The legal covenant had only a 'preparatory role' with respect to the covenant of grace.[31] He did however allow that there was one reference which could imply an understanding of the covenant of works prior to the fall. This was where Perkins wrote that 'The law was in nature by

creation; the Gospell is above nature and was revealed after the fall'.[32] Because Perkins did not explicitly use the word covenant in relation to Adam, Priebe concluded, 'This single reference is inconclusive...while this one reference to the law being in nature by creation could presumably imply a covenant of works, when it is evaluated in the total context of Perkin's [sic] thought, it does not appear to be of central importance'.[33]

The evidence indicates otherwise. The quotation given by Priebe in support of this thesis that Paul set down as one of the properties of the testament of works or of the law, was '*that it came from mount Sina*', must be understood in the context of being addressed to Judaizers whom Paul was opposing in the Galatian church. Because it came from Sinai for the Jewish people did not imply that it had no prior significance or existence.[34] Furthermore, Priebe's reference to the law being from Sinai was clearly stated by Perkins as an addition to the reference quoted above, where he said that 'the law was in nature by creation'.[35] The same law was clearly intended.

Perkins' view of the law indisputably indicated a *pre lapsus* application, and on the strength of more than a 'single reference'. First, he considered obedience to the law as an expression of the will of God, which men were bound to do 'by vertue of creation'.[36] The nature of the moral law was therefore something eternal, unchangeable, and perpetual in substance, and not a temporary expedient.[37] In distinguishing between the secret and revealed aspects of God's will, Perkins warned that men were not to 'make the secret wil of God the rule of their lives...because the revealed wil of God is the law, or the only rule of things to be done and beleeved'.[38] The wisdom and holiness of God's will were reflected in man's nature as a being in the image of God: 'Gods image wherein man was created at the beginning, was a conformitie to Gods righteousnesse and holiness.' In this primordial

arrangement man knew both his Creator and his will in order to show obedience, and possessed a dignity in creation, part of which was the fear and obedience of the other creatures which rebelled against man after the fall. Perkins suggested that there was a small reflection of this former estate in God's commission to Noah after the flood. And he saw it as part of a covenant: 'In the renuing of the Covenant with Noe; God saith, *that the dread and feare of man shall bee upon all creatures*'.[39]

Adam's estate of innocency was described by Perkins as one of integrity of wisdom, that is in true knowledge of God and his will, and of justice, 'which is a conformitie of the will, affections, and powers of the body to do the will of God'. Adam, therefore, 'was bound to performe obedience to the commandements of God', which were epitomised for him in the two trees and the observance of the Sabbath. This obedience 'would have brought perpetuall happinesse' or continuity of his blessed estate; disobedience would result in death, guilt and misery.[40] Adam's sin, Perkins defined as infidelity and disobedience, a trangression 'contrarie to Gods law'.[41]

That Perkins had in mind the same law that he equated with the covenant of works was beyond doubt in his answer to the question as to whether grace was commanded in the law. This could not be, he said, for two reasons: One was that the law was never given to reveal justifying grace, and secondly, 'Adam had fully before his fall written in his heart the morall law, yet had he not iustifying faith, which apprehendeth Christ'.[42] In *An Exposition of the Symbole*, he was more explicit: 'Adams general calling was to worship his creator, to which he was bound by the right of creation, considering the morall law was written in his heart by nature, which is signified in the Decalogue; where the Lord requires worship and obedience of his people'.[43] He then went on to interpret the two trees as Adam's sacraments, one to assure him, and

the other to warn him, and both serving to exercise him in obedience.[44]

When affirming in *A Discourse of Conscience* the continuing binding power of the moral law as distinct from the ceremonial and judicial, Perkins declared, 'it is the very law of nature written in all mens hearts in the creation of man: therefore it bindes the consciences of all men at all times'.[45] Because the law was natural, 'every man is bound to know the law', added Perkins in his larger *Cases of Conscience*, 'Adam had the perfect knowledge of God imprinted in his nature'. He lost this, not only for himself but also for his posterity.

The fall, however, did not mean that the natural knowledge of the law was completely obliterated. All men were still culpable though ignorant of the written law.[46] In the *Commentarie on Galatians*, Perkins said that 'when God first gave the law, he also gave the power to fulfil the law', but man lost it by his own fault. This could only refer to Adam as being given the same law as the Jews later received by Moses. Two chapters further on he made it clearer: 'We are as straightly bound to the obedience of the law of God, as Adam was by creation'.[47]

Further evidence is to be found in the *Exposition of Christs Sermon in the Mount*, where Perkins again viewed the moral law as summarized in the decalogue, as 'that part of Gods work, concerning righteousnesse and godliness, which was written in *Adams* minde by the gift of creation; and the remants of it be in every man by the light of nature: in regard whereof it bindes all men... The Law is naturall and was in mans nature before the fall; but the Gospell is spirituall, revealed after the fall, in the covenant of grace. Adam in his innocencie knew the Law, but he knew nothing then of beleeving in Christ'. The law, he went on to emphasize, was in Adam's heart when he needed no repentance.[48] Finally, in his *Commentarie upon the first three Chapters of the Revelation*, Perkins had the further

unambiguous statement: 'The *Law* gives commandement touching things that were by nature in *Adam* before his fall, forbidding those things which are contrarie to those virtues which were in his perfect nature'.[49] From all this evidence it can only be concluded that Priebe's confinement to 'this one reference to the law being in nature and creation' was manifestly inexcusable. When evaluated the place Perkins gave to the law in nature and creation assumed a very important place indeed 'in the total context of Perkin's [sic] thought', as he raised it in a variety of doctrinal contexts, not least in relation to the covenant.

This stress on Adam's relationship with God being governed by law, and having his continual happiness promised on condition of obedience, did not mean, however, that Perkins viewed the Edenic arrangement as purely 'legalistic'. When countering the Roman error of merit *ex condigno*, he quite emphatically said that no one, not even the angels, could merit anything at God's hand, 'Yea, and Adam also, if he had stoode in his first innocencie, could have deserved nothing from God, because it is the bounden dutie of the creature to performe obedience unto his Creator'.[50] While God promised eternal life if Adam kept the commandments, he did not say that the promised reward was to be obtained by desert. The legal arrangement was still a manifestation of divine condescension and grace.

Perkins held to a concept of pre-fall grace - 'Adam before his fall, did indeede receive grace both for himselfe, and for others also' - but he distinguished it clearly from justifying grace through faith in Christ which was the essence of the covenant of grace. It is somewhat misleading therefore to say that 'Perkins did not emphasise, as Calvin had, the gracious side of the law, and its relationship to the covenant of grace'.[51] At one point when discussing the sanctification of the believer, in terms of restoration to the image of God and obedience

which was the ground of that image, Perkins compared this to the creative purpose in which 'Adam once had this life of grace, betrusted to him'.[52] In another place he contrasted grace *pre lapsus* and grace *post lapsus* with respect to power and perserverance: 'Though Adam had a greater measure of grace then we now have, yet our grace hath a greater priveledge then his had'. In other words, Adam's situation was more conducive to obedience, but those in Christ had an assurance of perserverance which Adam lacked.[53]

It was Perkins' view of the work of Christ which revealed most conclusively the nature of Adam's relationship with God, and implied most strongly a pre-fall 'covenant of works' arrangement, even if the term was not explicitly applied. Christ as the second Adam came to undo what the first Adam had done and to restore what the first Adam had lost. Christ could only provide salvation 'by making *satisfaction* to the Father for the sinne of man'. This satisfaction entailed 'the perfect fulfilling of *the law*', and the sacrificing of himself in payment of the penalty demanded by the violation of the law.[54] In his office as priest Christ made 'a full propitiation to his Father for the Elect', that is, 'by performing perfect obedience to the will of God...he satisfied Gods iustice in fulfilling the whole law'.[55]

Christ's obedience to the law for man was the ground of the sinner's justification, since all Christ did was on behalf of his people. He had no need to merit anything for himself.[56] This is what the covenant of grace was all about and which made it so indispensable. Christ and his work were the foundation and substance of it: 'The covenant of grace is absolutely necessarie to salvation: for of necessitie a man must be within the covenant, and receive Christ Iesus the very substance thereof; or perish eternally.'[57]

Perkins introduced his exposition of the creedal

statement on Christ by saying, 'Nowe we may proceed at large to open the substance of the covenant'. He regarded the mediatorial work of Christ as 'the foundation and ground worke of the covenant of grace', and again interpreted Christ's redemptive work in terms of the second Adam providing salvation and justification through his obedience to, and satisfaction of, the righteousness of the the law, in order to undo the devastation and death introduced by the disobedience of the first Adam.[58]

Mutuality and Conditionality

It has already been indicated that Perkins posed a problem with respect to conditionality in the historiography of covenantal thought. Some scholars considered his theology of the covenant as basically bilateral and contractual in nature, while others regarded it as unilateral and testamentary. One or two, aware of the difficulty, suggested that he tended to fuse 'the two streams of Covenant thought', or that he appeared 'to hedge' the issue and to indulge in 'zig-zag equivocations' shifting his definitional ground back and forth between the idea of pure promise and that of conditionality. Trinterud actually managed to evade commenting on Perkins at all.[59]

Perkins offered a generic definition of God's covenant in *A Golden Chaine*, as 'his contract with man concerning the obtaining of life eternall, upon a certain condition. This covenant consisteth of two partes: Gods promise to man, Mans promise to God. Gods promise to man, is that, whereby he bindeth himselfe to man to bee his God, if he performe the condition. Mans promise to God, is that whereby he voweth his allegiance unto his Lord, and to performe the condition between them.'[60] Having laid this general foundation regarding the nature of the covenant, Perkins proceeded to differentiate between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace, defining the former as

'Gods covenant, made with the condition of perfect obedience, and is expressed in the morall law'. He then expounded the decalogue.[61]

It was at this juncture that Baker with his penchant for tidiness and his desire to allocate a unilateral role to Perkins, maintained that in making this division he 'blunted the conditional aspect', and suggested that Perkins attached the covenantal conditions only to the covenant of works. In order to try to substantiate this he jumped to Perkins' discussion of 'testament' in the next chapter, and in a footnote strongly condemned Collinson's contractual interpretation of Perkins, saying that Collinson ignored 'the distinction which Perkins goes on to make, between testament and covenant, and the fact that Perkins himself attaches the conditions to the covenant of works'.[62] But Baker himself neatly ignored the definition of the covenant of grace with which Perkins began this chapter before referring to 'testament'. He said, 'The Covenant of grace is that whereby God freely promising Christ and his benefits, *exacteth againe of man, that hee would by faith receive Christ, and repent of his sinnes*'.[63]

Furthermore, Perkins did not make a distinction between 'testament' and 'covenant' as Baker averred. Rather he identified the one with the other, when he declared, 'This covenant [ie. the covenant of grace which he had just defined in conditional terms] is *also named* a Testament: for it *hath partly* the nature and properties of a testament or will. For it is confirmed by the death of the testatour, Heb.9.16.'[64] This statement could not be construed as differentiating between 'testament' and 'covenant'. What Perkins was saying was that the idea of a testament was bound up in, or part of, the covenant of grace. And, of course, this idea did properly emphasize the unilateral aspect of the covenant, as Perkins went on to explain in the second reason he gave as to why the covenant was so named, for 'in this covenant we do not so

much offer, or promise any great matter to God, as in a manner onely receive: even as the last wil and testament of a man, is not for the testatours, but for the heires commoditie'.[65] But that did not blunt the bilateral aspect of the covenant of grace, which Perkins again and again continued to stress. In one place with reference to the binding nature of both the law and the gospel, he maintained that men were bound not only by the conditions of the law from creation, but that they were also bound by the gospel to believe in Christ, and that this bond also could not be without conditions, which were necessary to distinguish between those who were chosen to salvation and those who were not.[66] In his *Commentary on Galatians*, Perkins described the arrangement that God made with Abraham and explained the unilateral and bilateral aspects of the promise with the same interchangeable use of 'covenant' and 'testament'.[67]

In the *Exposition of the Symbole*, Perkins again defined the covenant of grace as 'Nothing else, but a compact made betweene God and man touching reconciliation and life everlasting by Christ'. In this compact there were two parties. God was the principal one who promised life in Christ, and man was the other, binding himself to believe and rest upon the promises because 'God makes no covenant and reconciliation without faith'. Perkins went on to enlarge on this: 'In the making of the covenant there must be mutuall consent of the parties on both sides, and besides the promise on Gods part, there must also be a restipulation on mans part; otherwise the covenant is not made'.[68]

The mutual and conditional nature of the covenant emerged again in Perkins' treatment of the sacraments. The sacraments were signs of a 'mutuall...sacramental relation' or union. The sacrament was not absolutely necessary to salvation, but to be in the covenant of grace by receiving Christ the substance of the covenant was.

This covenant bond 'as in human contracts...asketh for the mutuall consent of the parties', and the sacraments sealed or confirmed 'the bond mutually made before'.[69] Baptism was for 'such as were within the covenant', and through being washed in the triune name, Perkins taught, 'there is propounded and sealed a marveilous solemne covenant and contract: first of God with the baptized; that God the Father vouchsafeth to receive him into favour, the sonne to redeeme him, the holy Ghost to purifie and regenerate him: secondly of the baptized with God; who promiseth to acknowledge, invocate, and worship none other God'.[70] Perkins specifically used the word 'condition' of the baptized party's response. In *The Foundation of the Christian Religion* after stating that in 'the *covenant of grace* between God and man the party baptized is solemnly confirmed and sealed' in baptism, he continued:

> '*Q.* In the covenant what doth God promise to the party baptised?
>
> *A.* Christ, with all blessings that come by him.
>
> *Q.* To what condition is the party baptized, bound?
>
> *A.* To receive Christ, and to repent his sinne'.[71]

And 'the same covenant that was solemnly ratified in Baptisme' was renewed between the Lord and the receiver in the Lord's supper.[72]

While Perkins was adamant that baptism did not make anyone a Christian as this would make 'the seale of the covenant, to be as necessarie as the covenant it selfe', he also condemned 'wilfil contempt or carelesse neglect' of the sacrament. Children of believers were to be baptized, because a believing man ingraffed by faith into Christ, thus 'causes his child to be in the covenant, and partaker of the benefits and privileges thereof'.[73] Parents were therefore bound to teach their children the duties of the covenant. Congregations and godparents were similarly bound, for they were 'witnesses that the child is admitted into the Church, and is externally in the covenant'.[74]

These all bound themselves to the terms of the covenant, 'For as God (for his part) promiseth mercie, in the covenant of grace; so we in Baptism, doe make a vowe and promise of obedience to him, in all his commandements: and therefore Peter calleth Baptism a stipulation, that is, the promise of a good conscience to God'. This obedience constituted a voluntary self-binding to God's law. All men were already bound to this by the order of divine justice, but 'He that is bound by God, may also bind himselfe'.[75]

Perkins outlined God's order 'in making with man the covenant in baptism'. First he called him by his word, commanded him to believe and repent, and made promises of mercy and forgiveness. Then he sealed the promises in baptism when man began to exercise faith and repentance. Baptism, therefore, represented the 'solemnization' of the covenant of grace 'betweene God and the party baptized. And in this covenant some actions belong to God and some to the partie baptized'. God's actions were making the promise of reconciliation and sealing the promise both outwardly and inwardly by water and the Spirit. The actions of the party baptized were to bind himself to give homage to God - a homage which stood in faith in the promises of God and obedience to all his commandments.[76]

The use of the word 'solemnization' in the context of baptism conveys the idea of union and marriage. This concept allied with those of adoption and ingrafting into Christ were continually used by Perkins with reference to the covenant of grace between God and man. The seals of the covenant signified sacramental union.[77] Here also the mutual nature of the covenant emerged. This union, conjunction, ingrafting or adoption of a repentant sinner into Christ, Perkins likened to a human marriage with mutual parts to be played by each partner: 'The like we see in wedlock... This union is made by the Spirit of God applying Christ unto us: and on our part by faith receiving

Christ Iesus offered to us'.[78]

In a passage reminiscent of Fenner's remarks on the second commandment, Perkins also referred to the 'jealousy of God' as like that in a marriage covenant with three distinctive features: The first was the minister, in Christ's name, making offer of a spiritual marriage to sinners. The second was the making of a 'contract betweene mens soules and Christ, requiring consent of both parties which Christ gives in his word and we give in choosing him to be our head and turning to God and beleeving in Christ'. The third feature was that after the contract came the responsibility to perservere in the faith, living a life fit to be presented in judgement and to be married eternally to him.[79]

Two things were posited by Perkins as requirements in the union of Christ with his church. One was the giving of Christ to the elect by the Father and the Holy Spirit so that Christ and all his benefits could be said to belong to them. It was like a man in England receiving a gift of land from the Emperor in Turkey. It was truly his by mutual consent though he had never been in Turkey. So 'God the Father hath made an Evangelicall covenant with his church', in which he gifted righteousness and eternal life to his people, but this was to be received by faith: 'we again by his grace accept of this grant, and receive the same by faith: and this by mutual consent according to the tenour of the covenant, any repentant sinner may truely say, though I now have my abode upon earth, and Christ in respect of his manhood be locally in heaven; yet is he truely mine to have and to enioy, his bodie is mine, his blood is mine'.[80]

The second requirement for union was the actual coupling of Christ and his church into one mystical body. This was not a union in nature, but of the spirit. It was the same Spirit who dwelt in the manhood of Christ, now indwelling true members of the church and filling them with

the graces of Christ including the instrument of faith whereby they apprehended Christ and made him their own.[81] The benefits of this union, 'made really ours', were righteousness imputed for justification, and the sanctification which followed it. The latter involved the duty of labouring to be conformed to Christlikeness and avoiding the sins which would grieve the Spirit, 'and dissolve the bond of the coniunction between Christ and us'.[82]

As in Calvin, the possibility of covenant-breaking, or as he described it above, dissolving the bond of conjunction, arose in Perkins' works with the accompanying problem of how this was to be related to the eternal, perpetual and inviolable nature of the covenant of grace which he repeatedly affirmed.[83] This problem and its solution is related chiefly to the doctrine of election which will be considered later. Here it will suffice to identify covenant-breakers and the nature of their unfaithfulness. As inferred earlier, all men were covenant-breakers with respect to the covenant of works, as no one since the fall had been able to fulfil the conditions stipulated in the law of God. But not all could violate the covenant of grace for the simple reason that the promise was never specifically offered to all, or the covenant ever made with all.[84]

But among those who were heirs of the promise there were covenant-breakers. These were hypocrites or reprobate persons who by means of professing the faith and being received into the church. There was a sense in which such a person,'by means of the faith of either of his parents may be within Gods covenant, and so be made partaker of Baptisme, one of the seales of the covenant. For so God made his covenant with Abraham, that he could bee not onely his God, but also the God of his seede after him'.[85] Perkins distinguished between external and internal participation in the covenant. In the church

some were true members before God; others only before men. The latter could 'have the outward baptisme yet they...overturne the inward baptism that stands in iustification and sanctification'. Even the Jews of Christ's day were still acknowledged by the Apostles as belonging to the church and 'that the *covenant* and the *promises* still belonged to them'.[86] But they violated the covenant in refusing to believe in Christ, and though they were 'a speciall people, a peculiar and chosen people, the seede of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Iacob*, a people priviledged above all people of the earth; to whom belonged the covenant, sacrifices, worship, of whom Christ came according to the flesh, notwithstanding all which prerogatives the Lord destroyed them'.[87]

It was the same in the New Testament church. There was a difference between having a covenant made and a covenant accomplished through effectual calling. Only effectual calling 'ratifies all our covenants with God. Men in their baptism enter covenant with God, but often start from it and will not stand to it, so as the covenant is onely made: but when a man is effectually called, the covenant is not onely made, but truely accomplished, and that on mans part'.[88] The reprobate could respond to a general call of the word and for a time manifest some enlightment of mind, sorrow for sin, and temporary faith, but they always fell away again in apostasy and violation of the covenant.[89]

This apostasy did not mean, however, that when the reprobate who were church members produced no lasting fruit or effects from their baptism, that God was to blame: 'The fault is not in God, who keepes his covenants,' Perkins insisted, 'but the fault is in themselves, in that they doe not keep the conditions of the covenant, to receive Christ by faith, and to repent of all their sinnes'. And those who break the conditions of the covenant to which they bound themselves in baptism would receive greater damnation

than those who did not have this privilege.[90] The threatenings of the New Testament were no more idle than those of the Old Testament; both were conditional.[91]

The conditions stipulated by God and to be fulfilled by man as his part in the covenant of grace were twofold - 'that hee would by faith receive Christ, and repent of his sinnes'.[92] Some consideration of these is now necessary. Faith was undoubtedly paramount in Perkins' thinking as the key to participation in Christ and the benefits of the covenant. Faith was the indispensable factor in entering the covenant with God. None could 'bee within the covenant, but by faith'. Faith was 'a principall grace of God, whereby a man is ingrafted into Christ'.[93]

Like Ursinus, Perkins differentiated between historical faith, temporary faith, miracle-working faith, and justifying faith. The first three of these were of a 'common' nature and could be exercised by reprobates and hypocrites alike, but the fourth was peculiar only to God's elect.[94] The simple definition of faith offered by Perkins in his catechetical work when discussing justification was that 'Faith is a wonderful grace of God, by which a man doth apprehend and apply Christ and all his benefites unto himselfe'.[95] And a little further on, in stressing the necessity of faith in the context of the sacraments, he added:

'*Q.* What is faith?

A. A perswasion that those things which we truely desire, God will graunt for Christ's sake'.[96]

In these basic statements four things are obvious which emerge again and again in Perkins' treatment of the subject. One is that Christ was the sole object of faith. The application of Christ and his benefits was what justifying faith was about. The Christological core of the Reformed doctrine of saving faith was just as strong in Perkins' works as in the earlier Reformed theologians. He was quite specific in his emphasis here. The important

thing, he declared, 'is not to beholde faith, but the object of faith which is Christ'.[97] In repeating this in *The Exposition of the Symbole* he stated that Christ and his benefits were indivisible. Faith apprehended the whole Christ. All that was promised in the gospel relating to the salvation of men was bound up in Christ. 'In effect,' he argued, 'it is all one to say the saving promise and Christ promised, who is the substance of the covenant'.[98]

This Christological core was reasserted in *Cases of Conscience* where he listed the indivisible benefits: 'Election, vocation, faith, adoption, iustification, sanctification and eternall glory, are never separated in the salvation of any man, but like inseparable companions goe hand in hand'. Then continuing to speak of faith as one of the principal links in this chain, he pointed to the object and end. It was the means 'whereby a man is ingrafted into Christ, and Christ one with him'.[99] For Perkins Christ was the substance, but he also included the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing the benefits of salvation to the believer as part of that substance.[100]

The second thing about Perkins' definition of faith, following from the first, is the relationship of faith and assurance. Faith was a persausion that God would save. He enlarged upon this on several occasions. In *The Foundation of the Christian Religion* he stated that the application of Christ and his benefits was 'done by assurance, when a man is verily perswaded by the holy Spirit of Gods favour towardes himselfe *particularly*, and of the forgivenesse of his *owne* sinnes'.[101] A similar conclusion can be found in his description of the process by which faith was first exercised in the heart. Its aim was to arrive at 'an especiall perswasion imprinted in the heart by the holy Ghost, whereby every faithful man doth particularly applie unto himselfe those promises which are made in the Gospel'. And he added, 'This perswasion is and ought to be in every one'.[102] That is in every one

who has faith, because as he affirmed elsewhere, 'The nature of faith stands not in doubting, but in certentie and assurance'. This did not mean that Christians never doubted. They did, but they 'should not, for God commands us to beleeve'.[103]

Doubts could arise, because according to the strength of various factors in its genesis there were degrees of faith.[104] Faith was never immediately perfect, and also it was subject to assaults and temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil.[105] Christians, therefore, ought always to be seeking what Perkins designated a 'full perswasion' of faith.[106] Because of the degrees of faith and the exhortation to seek 'full assurance' following Perkins' insistence on assurance at 'the initiation of faith', Letham has claimed that 'There is a deep-seated contradiction' in Perkins' thought at this point, and that his description of the desire for pardon as 'the seede of faith' does not allow for the kind of assurance of which Perkins was speaking.[107] But this argument fails to keep assurance at the appropriate level of faith in the manner in which Perkins implied it should be kept.

This is evident in the passage under discussion, where Perkins was outlining five steps in the creation of faith: the knowledge of the gospel, the desire for pardon, hunger after offered grace, seeking to take hold of Christ in prayer, and finally 'an especiall perswasion...'.[108] Perkins was not saying that the kind of assurance in step five necessarily accompanied the desire for pardon in step three. Such desire was merely 'the seede of faith' and therefore merely the seed of assurance. Since there were degrees of faith there were also degrees of assurance. At that stage neither faith nor assurance had come to any degree of fruition.

In times of assault and temptation, 'the preservative' of faith, according to Perkins, was to look to Christ, the object of faith. This was done by meditating

upon the promises concerning his life and work and by looking to the Holy Spirit to stir up faith again.'[109] In this respect the sanctification or obedience and good works of the believer could also help, because these were 'a document of faith', the sure and necessary effects of justification; therefore comfort could be drawn from their heat even if no flame was visible.'[110] These were included in the benefits of Christ, and consequently directed the gaze to Christ.

Those scholars who insist that faith in Christ is of the essence of assurance and that any relation of assurance to sanctification or to the *syllogismus practicus* is contrary to that, are guilty of dichotomizing in a way that would have caused both the Reformers and their Puritan successors to throw up their hands in horror - namely, the separation of Christ and his benefits. Perkins was not struggling, as Letham suggested, in a effort to identify faith and assurance while locating assurance '*intra nos*, in sanctification' because of the conditional nature of the covenant. He was simply recognizing the unity and inseparability of faith and sanctification in Christ and that assurance was related to both.'[111]

The third feature of Perkins' definition of faith was that it was 'a wonderful grace of God'. Faith was a divine work and a gift of grace. 'God ingrafts faith' in humbled sinners. This work began when the Spirit of God produced 'certain inward motions in the heart', which were the seeds of faith.'[112] Explaining the twofold purpose and use of the gospel as the means of eternal life for all who repent and believe, Perkins said it was first designed to manifest the righteousness of Christ which had obtained salvation by fully satisfying the whole law of God, and secondly, it was an instrument of the Holy Spirit 'to fashion and derive faith into the soule: by which faith, they which beleeve, doe, as with an hand, apprehend Christs righteousnesse'.'[113] It was this faith of which the

sacraments were a seal and it entitled men to the inheritance of God's children which was promised in the covenant.[114] Perkins went on to describe it as 'a miraculous and supernaturall facultie of the heart, apprehending Christ Iesus, being applyed by the operation of the holy Ghost, and receiving him to it selfe'.[115] In another place he said that the faith of the elect was 'a supernaturall gift of God...a new grace of God added...after the fall, and first prescribed in the covenant of grace'.[116]

Because saving faith was the creation of the Spirit and confined only to the elect, it was therefore 'an infallible mark of election', a gift of the Spirit that could never be lost.[117] For Perkins faith and the receiving of the Spirit were inextricably linked so as to be practically indistinguishable in the experience of the believer. It was almost impossible to say which preceded which. When a man began to believe, said Perkins, he began to receive the Spirit, and when he first received the Spirit he began to believe. It was 'by faith we receive the Spirit', but 'we must not imagine, that we may, or can beleeve of ourselves without the operation of the Spirit'.[118]

It was in this way Perkins stressed the sovereignty of grace and the unilateral nature of the covenant. For example, Abraham's faith could only 'be ascribed to Gods meere mercie'. Before God called him, Abraham never dreamt of such a God or of such a covenant of grace and salvation. This situation pertained to all in every age, for 'if God have vouchsafed us the same grace, and taken us *to be his people*, and made a covenant of salvation with us...we must leave here to see where this favour is, and therefore to ascribe nothing to our selves, but give all the glorie to God'.[119]

But Perkins' stress on the sovereignty of grace did not prevent an equally strong emphasis on the active,

appropriating, or 'conditional' aspect of faith, which was the fourth charactistic of his definition. This aspect has been adequately illustrated already. Faith was that by which man apprehended and applied Christ and all his benefits unto himself.[120] This was described as man's part in the covenant, that in which stood the actions to which he was bound as the second party in the covenant.[121] The gospel, said Perkins, bound men to believe in their election and salvation by Christ, and this 'bond is conditionall, according to the tenour of the covenant of grace: for we are bound to beleeve in Christ, if wee would come to life everlasting, or if we would be in the favour of God, or if wee would be good disciples and members of Christ'. The covenant could not be without conditions, he reasoned; they were essential to distinguish, even in the church, between those who were chosen to life and those who were not. The commandment to believe was given to the elect in order to fulfil the intention of God in salvation. In as far as it was given to others it was only that they might see how they could not believe.[122]

Turning from faith to the other condition of the covenant - repentance - precisely the same emphases were made by Perkins. What applied to justifying faith was equally applicable to what sprang from it - obedience, sanctification, and good works, which were virtually synonomous with repentance, although in the *ordo salutis* repentance followed justification, adoption and sanctification.[123] But all these were of faith and its benefits, and were inseparable.[124] One was the evidence of the other.[125] As already noted, all were included in the benefits of Christ as part of the substance of the covenant, and were the necessary effects of true faith. No man either would or could repent and render new obedience to God, 'but such an one, as is in the sight of God regenerated and iustified, and indued with true faith'.[126]

Repentance was not something confined only to the initial experience of conversion. Perkins spoke of two graces in the work of salvation in a man's life. One was conversion whereby the soul was brought to faith and repentance. The second was simply 'the continuance of the first grace given', that is, perserverance in faith and repentance.[127] Repentance, therefore, was a life-long practice, related to 'newe obedience', which was the fruit of the Spirit and manifest in the observance of the moral law.[128]

Countering the objection that Christ had performed the law for believers and that they were therefore not bound to it, Perkins pointed out that this was in so far as the satisfaction of the law was concerned, or 'in respect of the curse and condemnation of the law'.[129] Christians were still bound to obedience, since 'it is a document of faith, and a testimonie of their gratitude towardes God, or a meanes to edifie their neighbour'.[130] In a statement which was the equivalent of the Reformers' third use of the law, Perkins said, 'it guideth them [the regenerate] to *newe obedience* in the whole course of their life, which obedience is acceptable to God by Christ'.[131]

For Perkins then there was no ultimate conflict between the gospel of Christ and the law of God. Both affirmed the same righteousness.[132] The former fulfilled the righteousness of the latter on behalf of those who could not do so themselves, and liberated them to live according to that righteousness. Christ, therefore, never attempted to make any new law 'more perfect than the law of Moses', or to add anything to it. His intention in the Sermon on the Mount was properly to interpret the law, and 'to cleare the true meaning of *Moses* and the prophets, which was corrupted by the false glosse of the Iewish teachers'.[133]

The works of repentance and obedience in the regenerate were attributable only to the Holy Spirit, but

they were still partly carnal, being tainted by the continuing sinful nature; therefore they could never come any where near to God's standard of legal righteousness. But tainted though they were, through Christ's merit they were not only acceptable to God, but actually rewarded by him. Such rewards, however, were not attributed to the work, but to the worker, and not for anything in him, but only for the merit of Christ apprehended by faith. Therefore, 'Christ's merit and our reward are correlatives', and not any personal merit of the believer.[134] The good works acceptable to God sprang from reconciliation with God, and were undertaken with faith and directed by the law of God. Although imperfect, God still approved his own work in the reconciled sinner and pardoned the faults which came from man's nature.[135]

In his treatment of the creedal statement on the Holy Spirit, Perkins underlined his view that regeneration, repentance, and renewal was the work of the Spirit bringing the benefits of the covenant to the elect. It was the Holy Spirit who created a new disposition of heart by imparting knowledge of reconciliation in Christ, and effecting regeneration, whereby 'a limme of the devil is made a member in Christ'.[136] It was the same indwelling Holy Spirit who governed the hearts of the elect, comforting them in distress and enabling them to perform their duties and produce the fruits of the Spirit.[137]

Repentance, for Perkins, was impossible apart from the renewing grace of God effected by the Spirit. It was 'a worke of grace' which pertained only to those in a state of grace: 'He that turnes to God, must first of all be turned by God'.[138] Consequently, in considering the *ordo salutis*, repentance always followed sanctification, but it was always prior in human awareness. In *The Estate of Damnation or Grace*, Perkins indicated that repentance was the initial open manifestation of renewing grace, and therefore appeared first in the eyes of men.[139] He made

the same point in *Cases of Conscience* and his treatise *Of the Nature and Practice of Repentance*: 'Though this repentance be one of the last in order yet it showes itselfe first'. With respect to time, repentance and renewing grace went together.[140] In this latter work, Perkins stressed that the principal cause of repentance was the Spirit of God, and the its primary motive was the gospel of grace and not the law. Only the gospel revealed the way of faith and repentance.[141] The law could not do this, although, as mentioned earlier, Perkins clearly believed that the law served as a guide in the repentant life.

But the strong unilateral strain in Perkins' ethical teaching did not minimize the bilateral tone. New obedience was undoubtedly the work of the Holy Spirit, but human endeavour was also stridently called for. Obedience was also an 'outward token of acceptance...whereby a man indeavours to obey Gods commandements in his life and conversation'.[142] Indeed, he said, man's redemption by Christ actually bound him 'more straightly' to obedience to the law than Adam was ever bound to it by creation. But this obedience of the Christian, Perkins was careful to show, was in no sense a legalistic bondage. The opposite was the case, because in Christ 'The more we are bound to obedience, the freer we are: because the service of God is not bondage, but libertie'.[143]

Perkins related the question of assurance not only to faith, but also to the other benefits which sprang from it. Not only was faith 'an infallible marke of election', but the inner testimony of the Spirit in adoption and the works of sanctification were also assuring.[144] *If* there was any doubt about salvation or election (and Perkins always had an 'if'. He did not consider doubt to be essential or desirable) - then it was always better to look to the last effects rather than to the first causes for assurance. If for some reason the flame of faith was burning low, then

the witness of God's Spirit, manifest in 'perswasion of love' and desire after God, was always clear. Or again 'If the testimonie of Gods Spirit be not so powerfull', as could sometimes occur when God was trying the godly, then the fruits of sanctification could have assuring value, as they were evidences of the work and wisdom of God's free grace.[145] For Perkins, as for all the Reformers and their Puritan successors, assurance was not confined to any one benefit of Christ. It was found in Christ and in the collocation of his benefits, that is, in justifying faith, in adoption and the testimony of the Spirit, and in sanctification manifest in repentance and new obedience.

It is impossible from Perkins' teaching on faith and repentance to say that his view of the covenant was a purely unilateral or a solely bilateral one. As with his Reformed predecessors, both elements were present in his theology. Perkins posited man's will along with the Holy Spirit and the word as one of 'three works' in the conversion of a sinner, with the qualification, of course, that it could only be moved and stirred to turn from sin when renewed by the Holy Spirit.[146] The renewed will then became 'an instrument of grace', acting in concert with the will of God: 'Being first turned by grace we then can moove and turn ourselves. And thus there is cooperation of mans will, with Gods grace'. Man therfore had a responsibility to believe and repent, but the power and the will to do so were the gift of God's grace.[147]

The ultimate reconciliation of the unilateral and conditional aspects of the covenant lay in the single will of God. That will had a twofold connotation for men: the absolute or effectual will of God and the signifying will of God (These correspond to Calvin's 'secret' and 'revealed' will of God, or to the decree and the execution of the decree). The absolute will of God was unconditional - God has determined what he will do with all men.[148] But 'The signifying will is that, whereby he

willeth some things for some other thing, and with condition, and so we may say, because that the condition annexed is a signe of his will, that God doth so will'.[149] Beyond that Perkins did not go. Like his fellow covenantal theologians, he was content to teach both aspects of the covenant and not to endeavour to present any final solution to the tension inherent in them, but to leave that in the eternal wisdom of God.

Election and Covenant

In relation to predestination, Perkins upheld the meaningful responsibility of man and the conditional nature of the covenant in terms of the Reformed distinction between the decree of God and the execution of the decree. Predestination was God's decree concerning man, either to salvation or damnation. That was 'the first and principall working cause of all things'.[150] But, Perkins insisted, 'it doth not take away freedome of will in election; or the nature and propertie of second causes'. The execution of the decree was the means by which God effected his will. All things, including creation and the fall, were means to accomplish that end.[151]

God's decree with respect to the elect was soundly Christological. Perkins entitled chapter fifteen of *A Golden Chaine* 'Of Election, and of Iesus Christ the foundation therof', and went on to affirm: 'The foundation is Christ Iesus, called of his father from all eternitie, to performe the office of a Mediatour, that in him, all those which should be saved, might be chosen'. He then raised the question as to how Christ was subordinate to election, and made the same distinction as Calvin, Beza etc., that Christ as the eternal Son 'together with the Father decreed all things', but 'Christ as he is mediatour is not subordinate to the very decree it selfe of election, but to the execution thereof onelly'.[152] This was something Perkins wanted to make clear, for he repeated it

in chapter fifty-two. The decree and the execution of it were really inseparable in the purpose of God, but sometimes they had to be considered separately, and this, he claimed, was such an occasion: 'In this second respect, Christ is said to be predestinate: but in the former, namely, as the decree is considered by itselfe, he is not predestinate, but together with God the Father is a predestinatour'.[153]

In the decree, the elect were chosen in Christ, to be redeemed by Christ, and to be united with Christ in the covenant. The covenant was for Perkins the means for the execution of the decree. As the countertype corresponding to Adam, Christ was the root of all the elect, just as Adam was the root of all his successors.[154] Since Christ was the substance of the covenant, it was to the elect in Christ that the covenant of grace truly pertained. It was they who were called to the knowledge of the gospel. It was unreasonable, Perkins argued, to suggest otherwise, since many have never heard the call of the gospel and 'the greatest part of the world hath ever bin out of the covenant of grace'.[155]

In addition to the certainty of God's expressed purpose for the elect, Perkins stressed that all that God predetermined and accomplished for the salvation of the elect would be applied, and in God's time they would be made 'sure of election in Christ to eternall life'.[156] Redemption and renewing grace were proper only to the elect.[157]

Election and the covenant of grace were therefore closely identified by Perkins. It was 'the tenour of the words of the covenant' from the very beginning which distinguished men, and not 'their unbeleefe and contempt of the covenant afterwards'. For example, Abel was received into covenant, and Cain rejected; Isaac was chosen and the covenant established with him, while Ishmael was cast out; and the same with Jacob and Easu. The distinction was

made in the protoevangelion, in the first promise or intimation of the covenant of grace. If the covenant had been made with all, reasoned Perkins, then all would have been the seed of the woman.[158] Again he said, 'If all were elected and chosen to salvation', then no one needed to care about the covenant.

This distinction was the ground upon which Perkins encouraged a sense of concern and responsibility. Because 'some are reiected, and never vouchsafed to come within the covenant indeed, therefore it standeth us greatly in hand to take the good counsell of the Apostle, and *to give all diligence to make our election sure*'.[159] To do this 'we must repent us heartily of all our sinnes, and seek to be assured in conscience that God the father of Christ is our father, God the Sonne our redeemer, and God the holy Ghost our Comforter'.[160] Faith was the distinguishing mark of the covenant and election. All unbelievers who contemned the grace offered in Christ together with those who never heard of it, and consequently gave no consent to it, were out of Christ and out of the covenant.[161]

The problem as to who constituted the chosen people with respect to Israel and the church was dealt with by Perkins in the same way as his Reformed predecessors had done. Predestination was the efficient cause of the church in both Old and New Testaments. But not all who belonged externally to the nation of Israel were of the true Israel, just as not all in the visible church were members of the church of the firstborn. Isaac and Ishmael, and Jacob and Esau were chief examples, and the distinction 'whereby one is in the covenant of grace, the other not; stands not in their foreseen faith and unbeleefe, and the fruites of them, but in the purpose and will of God itselfe'.[162] Isaac and Jacob were children of promise and were adopted as children of God and made heirs of the covenant only by the good pleasure of God who called them and not from any dignity in them, so that God's

'decree of saving the elect might remaine firme and sure for ever'.[163] And while Perkins in his works had a lot to say concerning evidences of reprobation and how far the reprobate could go in matters of religion and yet be reprobate,[164] he was nevertheless careful to say that any final conclusion as to who was reprobate and who was not was to be left to the secret judgement of God. Esau and Ishmael as those who were part of external Israel and circumcised persons were 'set foorth as examples of such, as for all outward prerogatives, are indeede barred from the covenant of life everlasting before God'.[165]

The true church for Perkins consisted of those who believed and were united with Christ. They were given to Christ in the the 'Evangelicall covenant' which the Father made with the church, and joined with Christ into one mystical body, so that the church was nothing else than 'a companie of the predestinate made one in Christ'.[166] But since the faith and secret election of these could not be seen, the visible, militant church consisted of 'a mixed company of men professing the faith assembled together by the preaching of the word'.[167] Some were members only in an outward sense, that is, before men; others inwardly, before God. It was those who were elected who were truly 'admitted into the covenant', and those rejected were 'cut off from the covenant, and from life everlasting'.[168]

Election and covenant were therefore to be understood in a twofold sense. In the tradition of Calvin, Perkins taught a general and special election: 'Gods special election is, when in his eternall counsell hee chuseth a man to life eternall... Gods generall election is, when hee vouchsafeth any people to become his visible church, to have and carry the outward signs and priviledges of his covenant'.[169] A church or people in the general election could fall away and be cut off from the covenant, but those within the special election, who partook of the spiritual benefits of the covenant, could never fall away.

When the reprobate participated in the outward privileges of the covenant, they partook of the signs only and not of the thing signified. The elect received both when the covenant was ratified in them by the operation of the Spirit.[170] The children of believing parents were to be considered as the children of God and within the covenant on the basis of their parents' faith until such time as they came to repentance and faith for themselves. But, cautioned Perkins, 'we must not assume that they are all so'.[171] Nevertheless, even those who would grow up to be reprobate had this 'prerogative graunted them of God in that hee vouchsafeth them to be in his covenant, whereby they are distinquished from wicked and prophane persons'.[172]

Parents could 'beleeve for themselves and others, according to the tenour of the covenant of grace...as parents in bargaines do covenant both for themselves and their heires after them...so then, the faith of the parents maketh those their children to be accounted in the covenant, which by reason of their age doe not yet actually believe'.[173] But while such persons could have outward blessings of the covenant attributed to them by virtue of their parents' faith, they could not derive faith itself, from their parents. That could only come from the knowledge of God's will and word. On the problem of children who died without 'actuall faith', Perkins merely remarked that they were 'no doubt saved by some other special working of the holy Spirit, not known to us'.[174] In the final reckoning all 'secret judgments' concerning the children of believers were also to be left to God.[175]

Summary

Perkins' works are manifestly free from the vexed questions concerning church government which disturbed the Elizabethan Church. Heylen surprisingly claimed that Perkins professed Presbyterian views.[176] But any

sympathies he may have had in the direction of nonconformity were well subdued in the interests of continuing to teach in the established church the doctrines which he considered to be more important than the issues surroundings prelates and presbyters.[177] While he has come to be regarded as a 'patriarchal figure of English Puritanism', Perkins himself dismissed the term 'Puritan' as inappropriate for the godly.[178]

But there was no ambiguity about Perkins' opinion of his own theological pedigree. He declared that his aim was to uphold the truth of the Christian faith, and 'This is in effect the doctrine of M. Calvin', whom he reckoned among 'the soundest expositors of the Scriptures raised since the Apostles'.[179] Puritanism may not have been a carbon copy of Calvin's theology in every respect, but Knappen's contention that Calvin 'determined the tone of its entire thinking' is nearer the truth than is the Miller/Trinterud thesis which presents them as largely different traditions.[180] It is significant that at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Calvin's *Institutes* were widely believed by those in preparation for the ministry to be 'the best and perfectest system of divinity, and the fittest to be laid as the groundwork in the study of this profession'.[181]

Perkins clearly saw himself standing in the stream of Reformed theological tradition as enshrined in the theology of Calvin. Whatever way the home-grown heritage or Rhineland writers may have influenced English Puritan thought, there is abundant evidence in the content of Perkins' theology examined above to show that his Calvinism reached him directly from the writings of the Reformer himself, and indirectly through men like Beza, Ursinus, Olevianus, Fenner and Cartwright. Differences of emphases, nuances and contemporary concerns due to the local conditions and circumstances of the church do not constitute a departure from the 'tradition of

interpretation' which reached back to Calvin and was to be handed on in clearer and more precise expression to the following generations.[182] The evidence supports the view that 'Perkins' thought is not a distortion of earlier Reformed theology but a positive outgrowth of the systematic beginnings of Protestant thought'.[183]

It can be misleading to isolate and contrast statements such as Calvin's assertion that Christ was the mirror for contemplating election and Perkins' remark that predestination was a glass for beholding God's majesty, and thereby give the impression that Calvin's doctrine of predestination was Christological in orientation while Perkins' was entirely theocentric.[184] It is all the more misleading when it is noted that this statement followed immediately on Perkins' trinitarian explanation of predestination. All three persons of the Godhead were united in making the decree, and 'the actuall or reall foundation of Gods election...is Christ', said Perkins, and his people were elected in him.[185] God's majesty or glory were reflected as much in Christ as in the other persons of the Godhead.

Perkins' doctrine of predestination revealed a strong Christological emphasis, and Calvin's presentation of the doctrine when considered in its entirety had just as much to say about it being something that 'towers and rules over all', a manifestation of the 'incomprehensible judgment' of God that 'gives the ultimate sovereignty' to God's wisdom and might.[186] The fact is that both men related the doctrine to the might and majesty of God, as well as to the person and work of Christ, though they may not have done so in the same place or in the same words. The findings of this research supports Muller's conclusion that Christology rather than predestination was the governing factor in Perkins' theology; and where his Christology shaped all things, predestination preserved Christology against all erosion'.[187]

In view of this governing Christology, Chalker's blunt announcement that 'For Perkins...salvation does not consist in knowing God and Christ' is unacceptable.[188] He claimed that Calvin and Perkins had a 'different conception of the central theme of the gospel'. One was christo-centric whereas the other was anthropologically orientated in which Christ became only the means by which men availed themselves of salvation.[189] He concluded: 'The crux of the difference lies in the fact that in Perkins...the Christological orientation of Calvin has been abandoned, and in its place has been substituted an orientation around a general knowledge of God, the law, sin, Christ, and the covenant'.[190] But this view fails to take proper account of the fact that Calvin had as much to say about the general knowledge of God, the law, sin and the covenant as Perkins, and secondly it fails in assessing Perkins' theology to take proper account of these issues in relation to Christ.

Perkins' theology of the covenant did not stand outside of the Calvinian tradition. Miller gave credence to the notion that covenantal theology originated with Perkins and the Puritans in order to provide them with a basis for moral obligation and individual assurance, which he claimed was absent from Calvin's rigid determinism.[191] But Miller failed to appreciate both the nature of Calvin's predestination, and also the presence of a similar theology of the covenant in his theological system.

Breward's observation that 'Christological and soteriological interest lay at the heart of Perkins' doctrine of the covenant', is equally true of Calvin's view of the covenant.[192] For both writers, the covenant was the means for effecting God's saving intention in Christ with respect to the elect, even though in both the term had a wider secondary application in relation to those who were part of the outward community of the people of God.

Perkins, of course, adopted the terminology that had

developed in covenantal thought since Calvin's time, and consequently spoke specifically of the 'covenant of works' in relation to the covenant of grace. Like Calvin, Perkins did not stress the covenant in relation to the pre-fall situation, but, as with the Genevan, the idea was inherent in his theology, particularly in his view of the law of God and of the nature of the work of Christ.

But nowhere was the unity and continuity of the Reformed view of the covenant more evident in Perkins' works than in the twin emphases on the sovereignty of grace and the reality of human responsibility. There were both unilateral and bilateral sides to the covenant. The precision and balance of Perkins' theology of the covenant in this respect was quite remarkable. Where one aspect or the other could be said to be more prominent in other theologians within the tradition, Perkins seemed to get both in proper perspective in a way which did not permit the one to shadow or eclipse the other. This is probably the reason why 'two traditions' scholars have had such difficulty in deciding which label to attach to his work. Perkins consciously held together in his system, without any sense of equivocation, 'concepts of *foedus dipleuron* and *foedus monopleuron*. The former concept recognized a mutual pact and agreement between God and man while the latter proposed a one-sided compact in which God, by grace, fulfils his own demands'.[193]

This balance was beautifully reflected in a paragraph which provides an excellent summary of Perkins' thinking on the covenant of grace. He penned it in his *Discourse of the Damned Art of Witchcraft*, when advocating the need of being joined in covenant with God as the only remedy against the devil's counterfeit 'leagues and covenants'. He said, 'For the Persons of men, there is one sovereigne preservative; and that is, to be within the covenant of grace, made and confirmed in the Gospel by the blood of Christ, and that not outwardly in profession only, as all

those be which are within the compasse of the Church, but truely and indeed as all the Elect are. And a man is then in the covenant, when God of his grace in the use of meanes, gives him a true knowledge of the nature of it, and of conditions required in the same on both parts: and withall gives him a true and lively faith, to apprehend and applie to himselfe the promise of God in Christ, touching remission of sinnes and life everlasting; yea further to shew forth his faith by the fruits of repentance and new obedience. When a man in this manner comes to be brought within the covenant, and is in Christ, he then receives assurance of Gods favour, and to him belong the promises depending thereupon, to wit not onely of the comfortable presence of Gods Spirit, but of the presence and speciall protection of his holy Angels, to pitch their tent about him, to keep him safe in soule and bodie'.[194]

NOTES: Chapter Seventeen

1 McGiffert, 'Grace and Works' 496.

2 For details of Perkins life and work see T. Fuller, *The Holy and the Profane State*, (Cambridge, 1642), 88-93; *The History of the University of Cambridge*, (London, 1655), 157; S. Clarke *The Marrow of Ecclesiastical Historie* (London, 1650), 414-418; C.H. and T. Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses*, 2.335-341; J.B. Mullinger, 'Perkins', *DNB* 45. 6-9; *The University of Cambridge*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1873-1884), Vol.2, *passim*. In addition there are a number of articles and theses which comment on Perkins' theology, some of which specifically deal with his theology of the covenant: Haller, *Rise of Puritanism*, passim; L.B. Wright, 'William Perkins: Elizabethan Apostle of Practical Divinity', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, 3. (1939-40), 171-196; Miller, *New England Mind*, passim; 'Marrow' 52, 54, 56-58 ; McKee, 'The Idea of the Covenant' 47-49; G.L. Mosse, 'Puritan Thought and the Cases of Conscience', *C.H.* 23. (1954), 109-118; Porter, *Reformation and Reaction*, 277-313; Wilcox, 'New England Covenant Theology', passim; Chalker, 'Calvin and Some Seventeenth-Century English Calvinists', 87-151; Priebe, 'The Covenant Theology of William Perkins'. PhD Thesis (Duke University, 1967); Breward, 'William Perkins and the Origins of Puritan Casuistry', *Faith and a Good Conscience*, Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference 13th, (London 1962); 'The Life and Theology of William Perkins'. PhD Thesis (Manchester University, 1963); 'The Significance of William Perkins', *JRH*, 4. (1966-7), 113-128; 'William Perkins and the Origins of Reformed Casuistry', *EQ*, 40.1968. 3-20; ed. *The Work of William Perkins*, (Abingdon 1970); C.J. Sommerville, 'Conversion *versus* The Early Puritan Covenant of Grace', *JPH*, 44. (1966), 178-179; Toon, *Hyper-Calvinism*, 16-18; Greaves, 'English Covenant Thought'; Stoever, 'The Covenant of Works', 44-46; R.C. Munson, 'William Perkins: Theologian of Transition'. PhD Thesis (Case Western Reserve University, 1971); Ishbell, 'The Origins of the Covenant of Works', 37-40; R.O. Stuart, 'The Breaking of the Elizabethan Settlement of Religion'. PhD Thesis (Yale University, 1976); Muller, 'Perkins' *A Golden Chaine*: Predestinarian System or Schematized *Ordo Salutis*?', *SCJ*, 9. (1978), 69-81; 'Predestination and Christology' 316-396; 'Covenant and Conscience in English Reformed Theology', *WTJ*, 42. (1980), 308-334; Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism*, 51-76; Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.276-286; Baker, *Bullinger and the Covenant*, 205-207; McGiffert, 'Grace and Works', 496-500; McKim, 'William Perkins and the Theology of the Covenant', 85-101.

3 Mullinger, 'Perkins', 7. For details of editions of Perkins' works see *STC*, 2.227-230. The edition used in this research was W. Perkins, *The Workes of That Famous and Worthie Minister of Christ, in the Universitie of Cambridge*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1608-1609). All references hereafter are from this edition, unless otherwise indicated, and accompanied with a short title of the work cited.

4 Breward, ed. *The Work*, 101-102, 171.

5 Miller, 'Marrow', 57.

6 Perkins, *Workes*, 1.116-118, cf. *Arte of Prophecying*, 2.762.

7 Hall, 'Calvin Against the Calvinists', 29-30; Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.276.

8 Muller, 'Perkins' *A Golden Chaine*'.

9 McGiffert, 'Grace and Works', 496.

10 Perkins, *Exp.of Symbole*, 1.126 passim.

11 Muller, *op.cit.*, 80.

12 Perkins, *Cloud of Witnesses*, 3.93-94.

13 McGiffert, 'Grace and Works', 498.

14 Perkins, *Golden Chaine*, 1.27.

15 *Ibid.*, 1.71.

16 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.167-168; 284-285; *Com.on Gal.*, 3:23-25 (2.289)cf. *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.16 'Church was in the household of Adam.'

17 *Com.on Gal.*, 1:6-7 (2.190).

18 *Ibid.*, 4:1-7 (2.313); *Exp.of Iude*, 3.504.

19 *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.2-3.

20 *Ibid.*, 3.5-9.

21 *Ibid.*, 3.15; 3.198

22 *Com.on Gal.*, 3:26-28 (305-306).

23 *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.128.

24 *Ibid.*, 3.198; cf. 37-38, 151-157; *Golden Chaine*, 1.72ff; *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.310ff; *Cases of Consc.*, 2.84ff.

25 *Golden Chaine*, 1.32; cf. 70,81; *Com.on Gal.*, 4:24-25 (2.347); Perkins frequently referred to the 'Legal' and 'Evangelical' covenants.

26 *Ibid.*, 1.71.

27 *Ibid.*, 1.32ff; *A Discourse of Consc.*, 1.512ff; *Com.on Gal.*, 3:23-25 (2.291-293); *Ser.on Mount*, 3.33.

28 *Ser.on Mount*, 3.34.

29 *Treat.of Free Grace*, 1.713; *Com.on Gal.*, 3:10 (2.272).

30 McGiffert, 'Grace and Works', 496, 497-498.

31 Priebe, *op.cit.*, 40-42.

32 Perkins, *Com.on Gal.*, 4:24-25 (2.347).

33 Priebe, *op.cit.*, 42-43. Møller, 'The Beginnings', 60f, also adopted the view that Perkins did not know of a pre-fall covenant. Stoever, 'Covenant of Works', 44-46, recognized, however, that the essence of the covenant of works was contained in the doctrine of law in creation.

34 *Ibid.*, 43-44.

35 Perkins, *Com.on Gal.*, 4:24-25 (2.347).

36 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.147; *Golden Chaine*, 1.27.

37 *Ser.on Mount*, 3.35-37.

38 *Treat.of Free Grace*, 1.705; cf. *Com.on Rev.*, 2:5 (3.278).

39 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.154.

40 *Golden Chaine*, 1.17.

41 *Ibid.*, 1.22; *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.162; cf. *Cases of Cons.*, 2.3-5; *ΕΠΙΕΙΚΕΙΑ*, 2.515; *Treat.of Mans Imagination*, 2.521-552.

42 *Ibid.*, 1.81.

43 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.154.

44 *Ibid.*, 1.155.

45 *Dis.of Cons.*, 1.513.

46 *Cases of Cons.*, 2.5.

47 *Com.on Gal.*, 3:10 (2.272); 5:1 (2.357).

48 *Ser.on Mount*, 3.33-34.

49 *Com.on Rev.*, 2:21 (3.318).

50 *Golden Chaine*, 1.105.

51 *Ibid.*, 1.113; Breward, 'Life and Theology', 57.

52 *Exp.of Jude*, 3.495,488.

53 *Com.on Rev.*, 2:4 (3.272); cf. *Treat.of Free Grace*, 1.709; *Treat.of Pred.*, 2.715; *Ser.on Mount*, 3.64.

54 *The Foundation*, 1.4-5; cf. *A Reformed Catholicke*, 2.560-561.

55 *Golden Chaine*, 1.27,29.

56 *Ibid.*, 1.82.

57 *Ibid.*, 1.73; cf. *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.27.

58 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.168-170, 177, 315. Other refs. to the essential legal nature of Christ's work are to be found in: *Com.on Gal.*, 2:15-16 (2.237-238); 2:21 (2.254); 3:10 (2.271); 4:1-7 (317-321); *Ser.on Mount*, 3.34-35; *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.56; *Exp.of Jude*, 3.499-500.

59 Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 434-435; Miller, 'Marrow', 57-58; Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.280-281; Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger*, 205-206. Those who see a fusion of thought are McKim, *op.cit.*, 94, cf. 96; and Greaves, 'English Covenant Thought', 29-30,32; McGiffert, 'Grace and Works', 498. And see Trinterud, 'Origins', 37, 41-44, 50-52.

60 Perkins, *Golden Chaine*, 1.32.

61 *Ibid.*, 1.32-70.

62 Baker, *op.cit.*, 262 n.32.

63 Perkins, *Golden Chaine*, 1.71 (itals. mine).

64 *Ibid.* (itals. mine).

65 *Ibid.*.

66 *Dis.of Cons.*, 1.513.

67 *Com.on Gal.*, 3:15-18 (2.279-282).

68 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.167-168; cf. *The Damned Art* 3.646.

69 *Golden Chaine*, 1.73; *Com.on Gal.*, 3:26-28 (2.300) The covenant was 'the foundation or substance of baptisme'. cf. *Cases of Cons.*, 2.85-86.

70 *Ibid.*, 1.73-74.

71 *Foundation*, 1.7.

72 *Ibid.*, 1.8. Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.278, quite erronously, and surprisingly, stated that the covenant was not even mentioned in this work!

73 *Cases of Cons.*, 2.86,87.

74 *Ibid.*, 2.88.

75 *Ibid.*, 2.111.

76 *Com.on Gal.*, 3.26-28 (2.298-299).

77 *Golden Chaine*, 1.72; *Com.on Gal.*, 3.26-28 (297).

78 *Ibid.*, 1.78; cf. *The True Gain*, 1.645-646; *Com.on Gal.*, 3:26-28 (2.307-310); *Christian Oeconomie*, 3.672-673,681-684.

79 *Com.on Gal.*, 4:17-18 (2.339); 4:21-23 (2.345); Fenner, *A Short and Plaine Table*, 100.

80 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.305.

81 *Ibid.*, 1.306; cf. *Com.on Rev.*, 1:18 (3.257-258).

82 *Ibid.*, 1.307; cf. *Est.of Damnation or Grace*, 1.368.

83 *Com.on Gal.*, 3:26-28 (2.300); *Golden Chaine*, 1.73-74; *Est.of Damnation*, 1.417; *Treat.on Pred.*, 2.721.

84 *Golden Chaine*, 1.113; *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.168; *Treat.on Pred.*, 2.691-692.

85 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.310; *Est.of Damnation*, 1.360.

86 *Ibid.*, 1.310-314; cf. 1.284-285; *Est.of Damnation*, 1.360; *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.16,118; *Com.on Rev.*, 2:5 (3.278,285); *Exp.of Iude*, 515-521.

87 *Exp.of Iude*, 3.522.

88 *Ibid.*, 3.484.

89 *Golden Chaine*, 1.107-109.

90 *Foundation*, 1.7-8.

91 *Com.on Rev.*, 2:5 (278).

92 *Golden Chaine*, 1.71; *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.167.

93 *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.27; cf. *Cases of Cons.*, 2.21; *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.168; *Golden Chaine*, 1.73.

94 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.125-126; *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.1-2; *Com.on Rev.*, 2:4 (3.271); cf. Ursinus, *infra*, 2.129-130.

95 *Foundation*, 1.5.

96 *Ibid.*, 1.8; *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.2.

97 *Golden Chaine*, 1.88; cf. Beza, *infra*, 2.86-87.

98 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.126.

99 *Cases of Cons.*, 2.21.

100 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.274ff.

101 *Foundation*, 1.5.

102 *Golden Chaine* 1.80.

103 *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.4; cf. *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.290.

104 *Golden Chaine*, 1.79-80; cf. *Foundation*, 1.6; *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.127-128.

105 *Ibid.*, 1.87-90 Faith was one of three areas Perkins believed to be particularly assaulted in the Christian life. The others were effectual calling and sanctification. cf. *Est.of Damnation*, 1.374ff.

106 *Ibid.*, 1.80,114-115.

107 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.283.

108 Perkins, *Golden Chaine*, 1.80; cf. *Foundation*, 1.6; *Est.of Damnation*, 1.367f.

109 *Ibid.*, 1.88.

110 *Ibid.*, 1.82, 115.

111 Letham, 'op.cit.', 1.286; Kendall, *op.cit.*, 61-64.

112 Perkins, *Foundation*, 1.5-6.

113 *Golden Chaine*, 1.71.

114 *Ibid.*, 1.73.

115 *Ibid.*, 1.79,80, 114.

116 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.126; cf. *The Damned Art*, 3.646.

117 *Ibid.*, 1.290; cf. 1.279.

118 *Com.on Gal.*, 3:13-14 (2.279).

119 *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.61.

120 *Foundation*, 1.5; cf. *Golden Chaine*, 1.78-80.

121 *Ibid.*, 1.7; cf. *Golden Chaine*, 1.32,74; *Com.on Gal.*, 3:26-28 (2.298-299).

122 *Dis.of Cons.*, 1.513.

123 *Est.of Damnation*, 1.368ff; *Golden Chaine*, 1.84-86; *Reformed Catholike*, 1.607; *Com.on Gal.*, 5:5-6 (2.364-365);

124 *Ibid.*, 1.374; *Cases of Cons.*, 2.15; *Ser.on Mount*, 3.29; *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.24,44,64; *The Damned Art*, 3.646.

125 *Foundation*, 1.6.

126 *Golden Chaine*, 1.85-86; *Est.of Damnation*, 1.372ff.

127 *Cases of Cons.*, 2.15.

128 *Ibid.*, 2.18-19; *Com.on Rev.*, 2:23 (3.321-322); 2:26-29 (3.324-325); 3:2 (3.331-332).

129 *Com.on Gal.*, 5:18 (2.383); *Golden Chaine*, 1.82.

130 *Golden Chaine*, 1.82; cf. *Cases of Cons.*, 2.7; *Ser.on Mount*, 3.34.

131 *Ibid.*, 1.70; cf. *Com.on Gal.*, 3:18 (2.383) 'We are all under the law, as it is the rule of a good life'.

132 *The Calling of the Ministrie*, 3.436.

133 *Ser.on Mount*, 3.1,33,40-42.

134 *Golden Chaine*, 1.105; *The True Gaine*, 1.637; *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.19,33ff; *Com.on Rev.*, 3.321.

135 *Cases of Cons.*, 2.19-21; cf. *Com.on Gal.*, 3:10 (2.272); 5:18 (2.383).

136 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.275-278 (irr. pag.); cf. *Two Treatises*, 1.454.

137 *Ibid.*, 1.278-282 (irr. pag.); cf. *Cases of Cons.*, 2.18-19; *Com.on Gal.*, 3:10 (2.272).

138 *Two Treatises*, 1.453.

139 *Exp. of Sym.*, 1.372.

140 *Cases of Cons.*, 2.15; *Two Treatises*, 1.453.

141 *Two Treatises*, 1.454f,463f; cf. *Ser.on Mount*, 3:34; *A Ref. Catholike*, 1.607-610.

142 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.292.

143 *Com.on Gal.*, 5:1 (2.357).

144 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.290-293.

145 *Golden Chaine*, 1.114-115; *Cases of Cons.*, 2.21-22.

146 *Com.on Rev.*, 3:20 (3.368).

147 *Com.on Gal.*, 1:15-17 (2.205).

148 *Ibid.*, (2.203).

149 *Arte of Prophecying*, 2.743; cf. *Treat.of Free Grace*, 1.707,723.

150 *Golden Chaine*, 1.15-16; *Treat.of Pred.*, 2.689.

151 *Ibid.*, 1.15,77-78,96ff; cf. *Treat.of Pred.*, 2.689-690; *Treat.of Free Grace*, 1.705-707; *Exp.of Lord's Prayer*, 1.329.

152 *Ibid.*, 1.24; cf. *Com.on Gal.*, 3:15-18 (2.281).

153 *Ibid.*, 1.107; cf. *Exp.on Sym.*, 1.288-289, where the Holy Spirit is included in the predestinators: 'As he is God we are predestinate *of him*, even as we are predestinate of the Father and the holy Ghost. As he is Mediatour we are predestinate *in him*'.

154 *Ibid.*, 1.109-110.

155 *Ibid.*, 1.113; *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.168.

156 *Ibid.*, 1.114; cf. *Est.of Damnation*, 1.369.

157 *Grain of Mustard-Seede*, 1.628; *Treat.of Pred.*, 2.693.

158 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.168; *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.108,118.

159 *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.118.

160 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.327.

161 *Ibid.*, 1.168.

162 *Ibid.*, 1284-285; cf. *Com.on Gal.*, 4:28 (2.353); *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.125.

163 *Ibid.*, 1.285.

164 *Est.of Damnation*, 1.356-362,396-404.

165 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.286.

166 *Ibid.*, 1.304-307.

167 *Ibid.*, 1.310; *Com.on Rev.*, 2:17 (3.308).

168 *Cloud of Wit.*, 3.118.

169 *Com.on Rev.*, 2:9 (3.285); 3:4 (3.333-335); *Cases of Cons.*, 2.88; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 2.24ff; Beza, *infra*, 2.70-71.

170 *Golden Chaine*, 1.73.

171 *How To Live Well*, 1.483; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 1.327-328; Beza, *infra*, 2.70.

172 *Est.of Damnation*, 1.360.

173 *Golden Chaine*, 1.74; *Cases of Cons.*, 2.86.

174 *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.129.

175 *How To Live Well*, 1.483.

176 Heylen, *Aerius Redivivus*, 342

177 There are no direct references to either in Perkins' works, apart from complaints against bishops of the Roman Church, see *Treat.of Cons.* 1.526; *A Ref. Catholicke*, 1.550. Pastors and teachers or doctors are the ministeries he chiefly refers to, see *Com.on Rev.* 2:24-25 (3.324); *Exp.of Jude*, 3.557, 573; *Ser.on Mount*, 3.206; cf. *A Ref. Catholicke*, 1.601; *Treat.of Callings*, 737-740 In the main, Perkins speaks simply of 'the ministers' usually with respect to their duty to preach and teach the Word and to live godly lives, eg. *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.196; *Treat.of Free Grace*, 1.706-707, 743; *Warning against Idolatrie*, 1.700; *Treat.of Callings*, 1.728, 737ff, 740; *Ser.on Mount*, 3.23-26, 209, 239, 241, 262; *Christian Oeconomie*, 3.699-700. One work, *Duties and Dignities of the Ministrie*, 3.429-463, is specially significant. Here Perkins said ministers were to be interpreters of the Gospel, 'that is, first one who can open and *explane* the covenant of grace, and rightly lay down the meanes how this reconciliation is wrought'. For a brief discussion of Perkins' concept of ministry see Breward, 'Intro.', *The Work*, 14ff.

178 P. Lewis, *The Genius of Puritanism*, (Haywards Heath, 1979), 20; Perkins, *Ser.on Mount*, 3.15; cf. *Exp.of Jude*, 3.601.

179 Perkins, *A Ref. Catholicke*, 1.599; *Exp.of Jude*, 3.552.

180 Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism*, 45, 376.

181 J.H. Blunt, ed. *Dictionary of Sects, Heresies, Ecclesiastical Parties and Schools of Religious Thought*, (London, 1874), 97; cf. Schaff, *Creeds*, 1.604; Cremeans, *The Reception of Calvinistic Thought*, 82.

182 Helm, *Calvin and the Calvinists*, 3.

183 Muller, 'Perkins' "A Golden Chaine"', 81.

184 Breward, 'Intro.', *The Work*, 86; Perkins, *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.298; Calvin, *Comm.on John*, 6:40.

185 Perkins, *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.288.

186 Calvin, *Inst.*, III.22.4; III.21.7; III.23.1; III.21.1.

187 Muller, 'Predestination and Christology', 380-395.

188 Chalker, 'Calvin and English Calvinists', 137-138.

189 *Ibid.*, 90-91.

190 *Ibid.*, 151.

191 Millar, 'Marrow', 51-52, 54, 74.

192 Breward, 'Life and Theology', 59-60.

193 Muller, 'Covenant and Conscience', 310; Muller includes Ames in this conclusion.

194 Perkins, *The Damned Art*, 3.646.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

The Scottish Connection: John Knox

The idea of the covenant has been so closely associated with Scotland in the popular mind that it is often assumed to be of Scottish origin. While this assumption has no foundation in fact, there has nevertheless been a long history of covenantal thinking in Scotland, going back beyond the Reformation. John Lumsden and James King Hewison have drawn attention to the tradition of 'bonds', 'bands', 'leagues' and 'pledges', which were used in ancient times for the defence of rights and property.[1]

The origin of these early 'covenants' is uncertain, but the similarity to the medieval fealty oaths and *pacte d'association* is obvious. Men like John Major (1470-1550) and Scottish scholars on the Continent would be likely communicators of such ideas.[2] G.D. Henderson wisely warned against the identification of these earlier concepts and what he regarded as the explicit use of the word 'covenant' after 1596.[3] The distinction suggested earlier in this research between the 'political' use and a purely theological use of the idea needs to be observed here.[4] The Scottish covenants tended to be basically political in outlook, and the strong national religious consciousness led to the kind of politico/religious philosophy that came to be enshrined in George Buchanan's *De Jure Regni Apud Scotos* (1579) and Samuel Rutherford's *Lex Rex* (1644). But if it was a similar distinction that Henderson had in mind, his date given for the appearance of the theological usage of the idea would require some revision.

There is little doubt that prior to 1596 the political use of the covenant was the predominant one, but shades of theological usage do appear which cannot be

ignored. This was evident in the writings of the foremost figure in the Scottish Reformation himself.[5]

Like most of his contemporaries on the Scottish scene, Knox was so embroiled in the reformation of political and ecclesiastical issues that he had little time for the penning of theological treatises. While awaiting his return to Scotland, he did join the continental Reformers, particularly Calvin and Beza, in defence of the doctrine of predestination, which was the main subject of controversy in debate with Catholic and Anabaptist opponents in the 1550's.[6] There is nothing of a similar nature on any of the other major doctrines of the faith, including covenantal thought, but his writings are studded with references to 'bands','leagues' and 'covenants' which merit careful consideration, particularly in view of the way in which the theological and political concepts intermingle and interact in Knox's thought.

In a rare piece of expository work written by Knox to Elizabeth Bowes on *The Sext Psalme of David* (1554), he used the concept solely in the context of David's personal relationship with God, as the basis of the psalmist's desire as a 'spirituall man' to be delivered from the plagues and torments of his opponents. Knox also related the covenant here to his view of election when he referred to the 'seallis and witnessis of that leag and felowschip that is betuene God and his elect'.[7]

A little later writing *A godly letter to the fayethfull in London/Newcastell/Barwyke* and other Christians in England, exhorting them to shun the idolatry of Roman religion, Knox again used the idea extensively in both a personal and collective moral context. He said that to despise the covenant of God or to 'refuse to be in league with God', in this case through idolatry, was evidence of the absence of true faith. Knox cited the scriptural formula of the covenant: 'This is the league betuixt God and us, that He alone sall be oure God, and we

salbe his pepill'. There was a clear element of mutuality in his view of the covenant here. God on his part would 'communicat with us of his grace and gudnes', while his people 'In making whilk league, solemnedlie...sweris never to have felowschip with ony religioun, except with that whilk God hath confirmit be his manifest Word'. Idolatry was to be avoided 'yf the league betuix God and us stand inviolatit'.[8]

Knox laid great stress on this responsibility of faithfulness to the covenant because obedience was required 'of all thame that be within his league in all ageis... For all that be in this league are one bodie...men, wemen, childrene, servandis, princis, preastis, reularis, officeris, and strangeris within the Covenant of the Lord'. Avoidance of idolatry was one of the chief things God required of them if they were to 'continue in league'.[9] To countenance idolatry would draw them away from God, show that they had 'little regard to the league and covenant of God', and would expose them to the punishment threatened by God upon such.[10]

Knox appealed to the example of the Old Testament patriarchs and prophets who were in covenant with God in order to reinforce the duty of faithfulness: 'O, deirly Belovit, gif we will stand in league with God, and be recomptit [accounted] the children of fayth, we must follow the futesteipis of Abraham, who, at Godis commandement, left his native countrie, becaus it was defylit with ydolatrie'.[11] When David shunned idolatry and claimed the Lord as his portion, it was as though he was saying, 'Such is the condition of the league betwene me and my God, that as he is my tower and defence against my enemyis...so must I be wholie his in bodie and soule'.[12] The prophets used the same language in condemning spiritual adultery 'meanyng thairby, that idolateris can haif no league, nor covenant with God, in sa far as thair hartis be alienated frome him, whilk the service of thair bodeis testifeis'.[13]

As Knox unfolded his teaching against idolatry in the context of the covenant, and applied it to the mass in particular, he also appealed in support of his argument to 'that singular instrument of God, Johne Calvin'.[14] Greaves has claimed to show, however, 'that the concept of the covenant reflected in this work does not indicate Calvin's influence on Knox's thought'.[15] But there is evidence to indicate that Knox's thought parallels Calvin's here. Calvin's teaching on the mutuality of the covenant especially in the Old Testament Commentaries was presented in the same kind of context. Covenant-breaking was mainly caused by the idolatry and unfaithfulness of Israel.[16] Calvin made much of this and also specifically applied this teaching to the contemporary situation and to the Roman religion in particular.[17]

The basis of Greaves' argument was that Knox was speaking of meritorious conditions in the covenant or league, and that his 'phraseology definitely implied the idea that once in the covenant a man might subsequently reject it and be condemned... Yet Knox's doctrine of predestination and perserverance make this theologically impossible. A man truly in league with God could not permanently leave that band and be damned'.[18] But Greaves has overlooked two important points here. One is that he has not taken careful account of Calvin's teaching on the covenant. If holding the idea of covenant-breaking with the doctrine of predestination represented an impossible situation for Knox, then it also did so for Calvin who frequently referred to the mutual or conditional nature of the covenant with Israel and held a view of predestination similar to that of Knox. Secondly, Greaves seems unaware of the answer to this situation in both Calvin's and Knox's presentation of the doctrine of predestination. It lies in Calvin's twofold view of election which has already been examined in this research. Knox had precisely the same view.

Throughout his treatise on predestination, Knox clearly distinguished between those who were outwardly among the people of God and those who were inwardly renewed by the Spirit. The former who rejected God's word and covenant could not be proved, in spite of all their privileges, to be among those elected to life.'[19] Like Calvin, Knox affirmed that election had 'two senses' in Scripture. Referring to king Saul, Knox said that it was 'one thing to be appointed to a temporall office and another to be elected in Christ Jesus to life everlasting'.[20] Again, he declared that Israel were 'all externally called, and they did all communicat with those externall signes and sacraments, which did signifie, and represent spirituall thinges. But he [Paul] doth not affirm that all did receave the spiritual and inward graces of the Holie Ghost'.[21]

The posterity of Abraham, argued Knox, were all elected to receive the offer of the promise. This was a general election. But, 'otherwise, Election is taken in Scripture for the eternall counsell of God, by the which he appointed life everlasting to such as he hath given to his Sonne before all worldes'. These Knox identified as 'the election of grace'.[22] True faith made the difference between these two kinds of election. Faith was the means by which the particular elect received life, but their election was not conditioned by faith because 'Faith is altogether the worke of God'. It was conceived and retained in the hearts of the elect by the Holy Spirit.[23]

The covenant could also be understood in this general sense in relation to the outward seed of Abraham. Knox agreed with his Anabaptist antagonist that God could have mercy 'when he will, and on whome he will, and that besides his covenante'. After all he had mercy on Abraham and Paul when they were still enemies of God and without knowledge of his grace. This was true also of the Gentiles who were 'without (as touching their owne

apprehension) the assurance of his covenant and league'. But none received grace who were not specifically elected to life.[24] Here Knox was clearly allowing that the idea of the covenant or league could also be used in a general way not specifically identified with election to life.

Furthermore it was adherence to and perserverance in the covenant which gave some indication as to whether a person was truly elected to life and therefore truly in league with God. Obedience to the requirments or conditions of the league was an effect, not a cause, of life since 'we be Elected in Christ Jesus to be holie, and to walk in good workes which God hath prepared. But everie reasonable man knoweth what difference there is betwixt the cause and the effect. Election (in which I include the Free grace and favor of God) is the fountain from which springeth faith, and faith is the mother of all good workes'.[25]

It is in this context that *The Godly Letter* should to be interpreted. Knox was not saying, as Greaves maintained, that all who professed to be part of the church in league with God were truly elect and therefore assured of perserverance. What he was saying was that those who maintained idolatry, no matter what they professed outwardly or what service they were engaged in, were showing themselves 'to haif no faith' and therefore they could 'haif no league, nor Covenant with God, in so far as their hartis be alienated frome him'.[26] And in so saying he was saying no more or less than Calvin and the other Reformed theologians taught concerning the church visible and invisible.

While Knox's discussion of the covenant and league in *The Godly Letter* was directed against Romish idolatry and had political implications for England at that time, it was nevertheless primarily a letter addressed to church congregations and the individuals within them concerning purity of religion and doctrine and of personal moral

behaviour. It was fully in keeping with the theological heritage of the Reformation. There is insufficient ground for saying that in this work 'Knox thus developed his covenant concept largely in a political context', and then later applied it to theological issues.[27] His teaching here was in the Reformed theological tradition.

Knox also discussed the covenant in relation to the sacraments. This was entirely in line with the Reformed theological use of the concept. The earliest hint of the idea of a band or covenant in his writings was in a brief declaration concerning *What opinion we Christians Haif of the Lordis Supper* (1550). 'It is', he said, 'a Confessioun, wharin we schaw what kynd of doctrine we profess; and what Congregatioun we joyne our selves unto; and lykwyse, that it is a band of mutuall love amangis us'. Those who come to the Supper bringing with them 'thair conversion unto the Lord by unfeaned repentance in Faith...receave the seallis and confirmatioun of thair faith'.[28]

There were more specific references to the covenant in two statements on baptism, both written about the same time. One was in *The Forme of Prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments* (1556), compiled for the use of the English congregation in Geneva and approved by Calvin, and the other was a short tract, *Concerning Baptism* (1556). In the former, quoting again the covenantal formula with reference to circumcision in the Old Testament, Knox taught that God 'also renewed the same to us in his New Testament by the sacrament of Baptisme; doing us therby to wyt, that our infantes apperteyne to him by covenaunt, and therfore ought not to be defrauded of those holy signes and badges'.[29] In this context Knox went on to distinguish again between an external and an internal adherence to the covenant, 'Many have bene baptized, and yet never inwardly purged', he said, but all that was 'ment and sygnified' by baptism was always effectually wrought in 'the harts of his

elect (in tyme convenient)', by the Holy Spirit.[30] But this certainty did not mitigate the responsibility of those baptized to seek to profit often by being present at the ministration of the sacrament, thereby 'beinge putt in minde of the league and covenant made bewixt God and us'. This would encourage them to seek to live godly lives which would prove 'whether we stand in the faythe of God's elect'.[31] Nor did it give any grounds for parents to neglect their 'deuty...to provide that your children...be instructed in all doctrine necessarie for a true Christian...and to abhorre and flee all superstition, Papistrie and idolatrie'.[32]

In *Concerning Baptism*, Knox was dealing the validity of the rite in those who had been 'baptisit in Papistrie', before coming to knowledge of the truth. Should such be rebaptized? It was not necessary, Knox argued, because 'Baptisme is the signe of our first entrance in the houshald of God our Father; be the whilk is signifeit, that we ar ressavit in league with him; that we are clad with Chrystis justice, oure synis and filthines being weschit away in his blude'.[33] Knox affirmed that the justice of Christ was permanent and could not be defiled, and that the league, covenant or promise of mercy was firm and sure to the elect and could never be frustrated or vain. The covenant may have been broken or spoiled in the meanwhile, but rebaptism was not the way to renew it. That was not the means 'apoyntit to assure oure consciences that the league betwix God and us is permanent'. God's means was the renewing of repentance and the awareness of God's mercy, and in order to have that mercy sealed 'mair deiplie in oure hartis', he 'sendeth us to the tabill of his deir Sone'.[34]

One sacrament, Knox repeated, was 'the signe of our first entrance' in 'the league of God'; the other was 'the declaratioun of oure covenant, that by Chryst Jesus we be nurissit, manteanit, and continewit in the league with God

the Father'. The first need not be repeated because God's covenant was constant and sure; the second was to be used often because of our dullness and infirmity.[35] Here again Knox's teaching parallels exactly the thought of Calvin who also appealed to the constancy of the covenant as the ground of his opposition to rebaptism, and regarded repentance as the sole condition of restoration into 'the covenant which God had once made with them' even though it had been 'received at the hand of a covenant-breaking priest'.[36]

It was in *The Appellation* (1558), that Knox first used the idea of the covenant in the specific context of political theory. Here he maintained that the principles of the reformation of religion pertained particularly to the civil magistrates. They had responsibilities concerning the reforming and observance of true religion.[37] Knox illustrated this chiefly from the Old Testament examples of king Josiah making 'a covenant that all the people...should walk after the Lord, should observe his law, statutes and testimonies', and of king Asa making a 'solemned othe and covenante...with the people to serve God, and to meintaine his religion'.[38] Part of such a responsibility was to purge the land of idolatry.[39]

This kind of admonition to judges and magistrates was not only applicable under the law, but also 'in the tyme of the Gospell'.[40] Gentiles by embracing Christ were numbered with the children of Abraham and were 'bounde to the same obedience which God required of his people Israel, what tyme he confirmed his league and covenante with them'. Knox then quoted the covenantal requirements concerning idolatry from Exodus 34, emphasizing that the righteousness and glory of God expressed in his law was at issue and that the gospel had not diminished the necessity to uphold that in any way.[41] Knox furnished his argument with many other biblical references, but also claimed Augustine as the chief authority in the church for his teaching.[42]

The political application of the idea of the covenant emerged again and again in Knox's role as the 'prophet' of the Scottish Reformation. From his exile on the Continent and after his return, he encouraged the nobles of Scotland in the pursuit of reformation, and this often took the form of entering into bands and leagues. The first of these recorded by Knox in his *History of the Reformation in Scotland* was by 'the gentilmen of the Mernse' in 1556, in which they agreed to refuse 'all societie with idolatrie and band thame selfis to the uttermost of thare poweris to manteane the trew preaching of the Evangell of Jesus Christ'.[43] Other bands much for the same purpose followed at Edinburgh, Perth, Stirling, Edinburgh (Leith) and Ayr.[44] Knox also made reference to a band in order to protect the young Prince James from his father's murderers, and bands made by those opposed to the Reformation.[45]

The idea of a mutual covenant under God between sovereign and subject also undergirded Knox's argument in his famous interviews with the Queen. When Mary accused him of allowing others to take her sword in their hands, Knox replied that the 'Sweard of Justice' was God's and given to rulers to execute judgement in the fear of God. When they failed their subjects in this duty, others could exercise it. Therefore the Queen ought 'to considder what is the thing your Grace's subjectis lookis to receave of your Majestie, or what it is that ye aught to do unto thame by mutual contract. Thei ar bound to obey you, and that not but in God. Ye ar bound to keape lawis unto thame...yf ye shall deny your dewtie unto thame, think ye to receave full obedience of thame?'[46] Knox outlined the same principles of lawful resistance in defence of God's word in his *Letter to the Commonalty of Scotland* (1558).[47]

Tracing the sources of Knox's thought is fraught with difficulty due to the scarcity of references, and so is the exercise of comparison with the continental Reformers due to the nature of his writings and the different

circumstances of the Scottish Reformation. There is certainly no reason why Knox should not have been influenced directly or indirectly by the writings of men like Tyndale, Oecolampadius and Bullinger.[48] But there is equally no reason to discount Knox's own appeal to the work of Calvin on the grounds that Calvin's concept of the covenant was purely a promissory, unilateral view, whereas Knox's was concerned only with contractual obligations.[49]

Knox as well as Calvin could speak of the league and covenant in terms of 'the promeis of his mercie maid to his elect' as inviolable and sure.[50] And on the other hand Calvin with a frequency that equalled Knox's could speak of the covenant in terms of mutual contract, conditions and obligations, which could be violated and broken. This was particulary so in the *Commentary on Jeremiah* to which Knox was said to be referring.[51] Again Calvin in his commentaries and sermons continually applied the exposition of Israel's idolatrous unfaithfulness to the Roman religion.[52]

The glimpses given into Knox's covenantal thought simply do not 'diverge quite markedly from that of Calvin'.[53] The absence of any systematic treatment and the largely undeveloped nature of the thought in Knox does not facilitate comparison. It just surfaces from time to time. However, in its theological orientation there is evidence of a remarkable harmony with the Swiss Reformers, not only in Zurich but also in Geneva. In its political application it must be remembered, as Vesey has pointed out, that Knox was not attempting to be a political theorist, but was dominated by a religious passion, with the Bible as the most important influence in his thinking.[54] The thought of John Major, George Buchanan, George Wishart, Henry Balnaves, John Willock, Theodore Beza, John Ponet and Christopher Goodman have all been examined as possible contributing factors in the development of Knox's political theory by 1558.[55] But

even here Calvin's influence cannot be discounted, as Knox could be merely extending Calvin's thinking on the subject of passive obedience, through the door which the Genevan reformer left open for the possibility of active resistance in citing the example of the Ephori.[56]

In what can be gleaned of Knox's covenantal thought in his works, there is evidence of influence from the twin medieval streams of theological and political expression, and which touch each other, particularly in the *Appellation*. Otherwise the Reformed tradition of the theology of the covenant in both its unilateral and bilateral aspects is distinctly manifest and to the fore, especially in Knox's view of the sacraments. And there is a distinct application of the political expression of the idea of social contract manifest in his relationships with the monarch and nobility in the revolutionary consequences of the Reformation. On the political side Knox may have gone beyond Calvin's recommendations, but in the development of covenantal theology the suggestion of a major divergence between Knox and Calvin cannot be substantiated.

NOTES: Chapter Eighteen

1 J. Lumsden, *The Covenants of Scotland*, (Paisley, 1914); J. King Hewison, '"Bonds" or Covenants in Scotland, with a list of extant copies of the Scottish Covenants', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 17. (1907-08), 166-182; cf. also D.Hay Fleming, *The Story of the Scottish Covenants in Outline*, (Edinburgh, 1904), 2-27.

2 John Major, like Knox, came from the district of Haddington and was educated in Cambridge and Paris where he received his doctorate in 1505. He taught philosophy and theology on the Continent before moving to Glasgow University in 1518 and St. Andrews in 1523 where he remained until 1550 apart from a short spell in Montaigu from 1525-1531. Knox was his pupil probably both at Glasgow and St. Andrews. See T. McCrie, *Life of John Knox*, (London, 1847), 3-6; P. Hume Brown, *John Knox: A Biography*, 2 vols. (London, 1895), 1.13-14, 20-28, 50-52, 263; 2.304 n.2; E. Percy, *John Knox*, (London, 1937), 47-48; J. Ridley, *John Knox*, (New York, 1968), 15-17, 529, 535; J.H. Burns, 'The Theory of Limited Monarchy in Sixteenth-Century Scotland'. PhD Thesis (Aberdeen University, 1952), 8-47; 'The Scotland of John Major', *Innes Review*, 2. (1951), 65-76; J. MacKinnon, *A History of Modern Liberty*, 4 vols. (London, 1906-41), 371-372; Allen, *History of Political Thought*, 336-337; Skinner, *Foundations*, 2.24, 117-123, 149, 176-177, 320-323, 340-348; G.W. Sprott, 'Major', *DNB*, 35.386-388; A.H. Williamson, *Scottish National Consciousness in the Age of James VI*, (Edinburgh, 1979), 97-103.

3 G.D. Henderson, 'The Idea of the Covenant in Scotland', *EQ*, 27. (1955), 2. This article was reprinted in *The Burning Bush*, (Edinburgh, 1957), 61-63.

4 'Political' use includes its use in the field of ecclesiastical politics as well as the national.

5 Numerous works on Knox are available for biographical detail: McCrie, *op.cit.*; F.A. MacCunn, *John Knox*, (London, 1895); Hume Brown, *op.cit.*; A. Mackay, 'Knox', *DNB*, 31.308-328; W. Hastie, *The Theology of the Reformed Church in Its Fundamental Principles*, (Edinburgh, 1904); J. Denney, 'John Knox: His Religious Life and Theological Position', *Hartford Seminary Record*, 15. (1905), 282-296; A. Lang, *John Knox and the Reformation*, (London, 1905); R.S. Rait, 'Scotland and John Knox', *Fortnightly Review*, 78. (1905), 95-108; D. MacMillan, *John Knox*, (London, 1905); H. Cowan, *John Knox: Hero of the Scottish Reformation*, (New York, 1905); J. Glasse, *John Knox*, (London, 1905); 'John Knox and the Scottish Reformation', *Quarterly Review*, 205. (1906), 169-195; E.D. Warfield,

'John Knox, Reformer of a Kingdom', *PTR*, 3. (1905), 376-398; E. Russell, 'John Knox as a Statesman', *PTR*, 6. (1908), 1-28; E. Muir, *John Knox: Portrait of a Calvinist*, (London, 1930); M. Bowen, *The Life of John Knox*, (London, 1940); E. Percy, *op.cit.*; H. Watt, *John Knox in Controversy*, (Edinburgh, 1950); J.D. Mackie, *John Knox*, (London, 1951); G. MacGregor, *The Thundering Scot: A Portrait of John Knox*, (Philadelphia, 1957); G.F. MacLeod, *John Knox and Today*, (Geneva, 1959); E. Whitley, *Plain Mr. Knox*, (Edinburgh, 1960); J. McEwen, *The Faith of John Knox*, (London, 1961); M. Lee, 'John Knox and his History', *SHR*, 45. (1966), 79-88; R.G. Kyle, 'The Mind of John Knox'. PhD Thesis (Temple University, 1965); J. Ridley, *op.cit.*; D. Shaw, ed. *John Knox: A Quatercentenary Reappraisal*, (Edinburgh, 1975); V. der Walt, 'John Knox: The Scottish Reformer Who Feared No Man', *Our Reformational Tradition*, (1984), 146-154.

6 Knox, *Works*, 5.9-468; see also R.L. Greaves, 'The Predestinarian Question', *Theology and Revolution: Studies in the Thought of John Knox*, (Grand Rapids, 1980), 25-43. Greaves puts Knox's treatise into its contemporary controversial setting, but his suggestion that Knox wrote it merely to appease Calvin's anger against *The First Blast*, is so untypical of Knox that it scarcely merits serious consideration (28-29).

7 *Ibid.*, 3.143.

8 *Ibid.*, 3.190-191.

9 *Ibid.*, 3.191.

10 *Ibid.*, 3.192-193.

11 *Ibid.*, 3.194.

12 *Ibid.*, 3.195-196.

13 *Ibid.*, 3.196.

14 *Ibid.*, 3.201

15 Greaves, *op.cit.*, 115.

16 Calvin, (see n. 49).

17 *Ibid.*, (see n. 50).

18 Greaves, *op.cit.*, 116, 124. Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.248-256, also followed this line of argument, and equally failed to recognize the distinction made which resolves the tension in both Knox's and Calvin's presentation of election.

19 Knox, *Works*, 5.147-157 (Esau); 5.282 (Balaam); 5.288 (Saul); 5.301-302 (Judas, Ahithophil, Balaam); 5.334, 340 (Saul, Achab, Ahithophil, Absolom); 5. 386-387 (Ananias and Sapphira); 5.383ff (Jews).

20 *Ibid.*, 5.288; cf. Calvin, *infra*, 2.24ff.

21 *Ibid.*, 5.285; cf. 5.117,478,484.

22 *Ibid.*, 5.280. V.E. d'Assonville, *John Knox and the Institutes of Calvin: A Few Points of Contact in their Theology*, (Durban, 1968), 79,81, recognized this as one of the distinctive correspondences between the theology of Calvin and Knox. D'Assonville's interpretation of Knox's doctrine of predestination (pp.33-63) is much more consistent than that of Letham, *op.cit.*, 253ff and n.91, who criticized the former as being 'wide of the mark'. The 'insoluble tensions' Letham claims to find only exist when the distinction of a twofold election is ignored.

23 *Ibid.*, 5.281; cf. also 3.341ff Knox's emphasis in his edition of Balnave's *On Justification by Faith.*

24 *Ibid.*, 5.344-345.

25 *Ibid.*, 5.156.

26 *Ibid.*, 3.191,196.

27 Greaves, *op.cit.*, 118; Letham, *op.cit.*, 1.248-250, also treated this work as a political document, and said that its 'primary interest is *collective*, with the obedience of England, rather than the individual. But Knox was stressing the obedience of all classes of people within the church. Rulers only constituted one group here. It is interesting that Marvin A. Breslow in his recent editon of *The Political Writings of John Knox*, (Washington, 1985) did not include *The Godly Letter* in this category.

28 Knox, *Works*, 3.74.

29 *Ibid.*, 4.187.

30 *Ibid.*, 4.188.

31 *Ibid.*, 4.189.

32 *Ibid.*, 4.189-190.

33 *Ibid.*, 4.123.

34 *Ibid.*, 4.123-124.

35 *Ibid.*, 4.125.

36 Calvin, *Inst.*, IV.15.16-17. See also Calvin's correspondence with Knox on baptism. The ground for the administration of baptism was stated by Calvin to be 'on account of the perpetual covenant of God' (Knox, *Works*, 6.75-77; 94-98.

37 Knox, *Works*, 4.490-491.

38 *Ibid.*, 4.489, 500; see 2 Kings 23:1-28; 2 Chron. 34; and 15:11-15. On this last reference concerning Asa's covenant Greaves distinguishes this from the covenant Josiah and the people made with God, and says it is 'an example of yet another kind of covenant, namely, one between the sovereign and his subject'. But the biblical

reference does not specifically say that. It simply implies that the king and the people together agreed to enter into a covenant with the Lord. It was however not uncommon for a sovereign/subject covenant to follow such a united covenant. cf. 2 Kings 11:17 'Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people that they would be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people'.

39 Ibid., 4.489, 501ff.

40 *Ibid.*, 4.491, 504f.

41 Ibid., 4.505-506.

42 *Ibid.*, 4.491-494. Knox's reference in Augustine is *Epist. 50*, a letter to Boniface. This is probably 'A Treatise Concerning the Correction of the Donatists', in *Works*, ed. M. Dods, 3.479-520. In older editions of Augustine's works this was included in the Epistles.

43 *Ibid.*, 1.250-251. Some doubt has been expressed as to whether this early association of nobles constitued a true band, because there was no written agreeement. But there is no doubt about the later bands which were officially signed. See McCrie, *Life of Knox*, 1.179; Percy, *John Knox*, 274-278.

44 *Ibid.*, 1.273-274 (Edinburgh, 3 Dec. 1557); 1.344-345 (Perth, 30 May 1559); 1.381-382 (Stirling, 1 Aug. 1559); 2.61-65 (Edinburgh, 27 April 1560); 2.347-350 (Ayr, 3 Sept. 1562).

45 *Ibid.*, 2.555-556; 2.180.

46 *Ibid.*, 2.372-373; cf. 4.539-540.

47 *Ibid.*, 4.526-528, 533-537.

48 Greaves, *op.cit.*, 122-123.

49 *Ibid.*, 124.

50 Knox, *Works*, 4.123. *Contra* Letham, *op.cit.*, 1.253, who says that in Knox 'mercy and love are in virtually total eclipse'.

51 Calvin, *Com.on Jer.*, 11:1-5; 11:9-10; 14:21; 22:8-9 (This reference is interesting in that Calvin speaks of the conspiracy of the people of Judah and Jerusalem against the word of God in terms of 'banding or joining together', in contrast to the covenant that ought to bind them to the Lord).

52 Literally scores of references could be cited here from commentaries and writings that would have been available to Knox. But staying with the *Com.on Jer.*, cf. 2:8; 2:20; 2:23; 2:27-28; 11:13; 44:17.

53 Letham, *op.cit.*, 248.

54 W.J. Vesey, 'The Sources of the Idea of Active Resistance in the Political Theory of John Knox'. PhD Thesis (Boston University, 1961); cf. J.H. Burns, 'The Theory of Limited Monarchy in Sixteenth-Century Scotland'. PhD Thesis (Aberdeen University, 1952), 206; J.R. Gray, 'The Political Theory of John Knox', *CH*, 8. (1939), 169; W.O. Chadwick, 'John Knox and Revolution', *Andover Newton Quarterly*, 15. (1975), 255; Stalker, *op.cit.*, 169; Hume Brown, *op.cit.*, 113-121.

55 Vesey, *op.cit.*, 99-144, 182-197; cf. R.C. Gamble, 'The Christian and the Tyrant', *WTJ*, 46. (1984), 132-138.

56 J.T. McNeill, 'The Democratic Element in Calvin's Thought', *CH*, 18. (1949), 163; Vesey, *op.cit.*, 151-182; cf. Chadwick, *op.cit.*, 261.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Scottish Connection: Robert Rollock and Robert Howie

The first Scotsman to make the idea of the covenant the subject of a theological treatise was Robert Rollock (1555-1599), in a little work entitled *Quaestiones et Responsiones Aliquot de Foedere Dei: deque Sacramento quod Foederis Dei sigullum est* (1596). The substance of this rare work was incorporated into a larger treatise on effectual calling, published the following year, *Tractatus de Vocatione efficaci* (1597).[1] Rollock is one of the neglected figures of Scottish Church history.[2] This is reflected, not only in the lack of research, but also in the number of his works, mainly excellent commentaries on Scripture, which have remained untranslated.[3]

Educated at St. Salvator's College, St. Andrews, where he taught for a time, Rollock became the first principal of Edinburgh University, then the Town's College, newly established by James VI.[4] Rollock exercised a remarkable ministry, not only through his college work, but in the pulpit. A whole generation of notable Scottish divines were trained by him, including Charles Ferme, John Welch, John Row, David Calderwood and Robert Boyd.[5]

Rollock never studied outside of Scotland, yet the unmistakable tone of continental Reformed thought is evident in his works. The 'Summary of Theology', with which he prefaced *De Vocatione efficaci* in order to show the place of the subject in the overall science of theology is of special interest in this respect. It has been shown to have a striking resemblance to the *Westminster Confession*, but it can also be compared favourably with preceding theologians.[6] The editor of the *Select Works of Rollock* endeavoured 'to prove clearly that Rollock had carefully studied Calvin', which is not at all surprising

for a theologian of the time.[7]

There is evidence to demonstrate that Beza also rated highly in the opinion of Rollock. In the first place he had a clear predeliction for Beza's translation of the New Testament in his exposition of the Scriptures, although he himself was not wanting in linguistic ability.[8] Each Saturday afternoon, Rollock was in the habit of reading aloud from, and explaining to, his students, Beza's *Quaestiones et Responsiones*. He even considered it worthwhile preparing and publishing a short analysis of this work, *Prolegomena in primum librum Quaestiones Theodori Bezae*, in order to faciliate the memories of the students.[9] He choose the same catechetical style as Beza's for his small work on the covenant and sacraments. It is interesting too that Rollock followed Beza's pattern of preaching, in a series of sermons on the suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ, which were later published. Both however were probably following the example of Calvin.[10] A comparison of Rollock's sermons with Beza's volumes shows a remarkable degree of correspondence of thought.[11]

The appreciation of Beza's work by Rollock was reciprocated. When two of Rollock's commentaries, on the Epistle to the Romans and the Epistle to the Ephesians, came into Beza's hands, he immediately esteemed them as 'a treasure most precious'. Writing to a former pupil, John Johnston, who had studied at Geneva and become Professor of Divinity at St. Andrews, he said that he judged Rollock's work to be of special note among those who had written on the apostolic epistles, and continued: 'take it to be spoken without flattery or partiality, that I never read or met with any thing in this kind of interpretation more pithily, elegantly, and judiciously written: so as I could not contain myself, but must needs give thanks, as I ought, unto God, for this so necessary and so profitable a work'.[12]

A word needs to be said about the influence of Ramism on Rollock. Letham has portrayed him as a rampant Ramist. As evidence he mentioned three twofold divisions in Rollock's 'Summary of Theology' and then added, 'And so on! This unmistakably Ramist *schema* is followed throughout the course of Rollock's summary'.[13] The impression given is that Rollock's work was entirely divided in this way. But this is seriously misleading. There were fourteen main heads with their sub-divisions in the 'Summary', and of these only six were bifurcations.[14]

Nor does Rollock's teaching curriculum support the view that he was sold out on Ramism. Charteris, his pupil and successor, described the four-year 'philosophical curriculum' and never once mentioned Ramus. Rather, he said, 'he read aloud to his pupils, on each day of the week, with the utmost minuteness and care, the text of Aristotle, beginning with the *Organum Logicum*, and going through the *Ethica Nicomachela* and the *Physica*'. This he accompanied with instruction in arithmetic, anatomy and finally geography from the work of Johannes de Sacrobosco'[15] Other sources indicate, however, that Ramus' *Dialectics* were taught by Rollock. Grant summed up his teaching by saying it was 'a mixture of the study of Aristotle with the revolt against him, as exemplified in...Ramus and Talaeus', and that the examination system 'was entirely in Aristotle, with the ideas...of Ramus...added on'.[16]

The evidence indicates that Rollock, like most of the other theologians in the Reformed tradition, was ready to utilize in his teaching method what he considered to be of value in the thought of Ramus, but not to follow him exclusively. Nor is there any evidence, as will be seen, that the adoption of Ramist procedures led to a formulation in Rollock, 'whereby the covenant of grace is itself seen as being essentially a law covenant...governed...by the prior *datum* of the *foedus operum*'.[17] The relationship of grace and law as manifest in Rollock's works had an older

pedigree.

Another inevitable source of influence on Rollock's thinking was the English Puritans. Cartwright was well-known and highly-esteemed in St. Andrews where Rollock had studied, being once invited to occupy a chair in St. Mary's College.[18] The Puritan printer, Robert Waldegrave, had moved to Edinburgh and there produced two works of Dudley Fenner during 1592.[19] And, of course, no theologian with any Reformed inclinations at all could have failed to read Perkins. Waldegrave again supplied the material *in situ*, printing *A Golden Chaine* and *A Case of Conscience* in 1592, and the *Exposition of the Lords Prayer* in 1593.[20]

Rollock's teaching on the legal and evangelical covenants clearly followed the pattern of Perkins,[21] as did his four-fold division of faith - historical, temporary, miracle-working and justifying.[22] Again, there are discernible shades of Perkins' influence in the title of chapter thirty in *De Vocatione*, 'How far a wicked man may Proceed in Repentance'.[23]

Rollock, then, could have gleaned considerable knowledge of the covenant from his Genevan and Puritan sources. But his appreciation of continental theology also extended to Heidelberg. After using Beza's catechetical manual with his students on Saturday afternoons, when they returned from church on Sunday afternoons he gave them further instruction, this time using the *Heidelberg Catechism*, no doubt with the aid of Ursinus' *Compendium*.[24] But another important link in the development of Rollock's thinking on the covenant was established with the Heidelberg theologians in the person of a fellow Scot, Robert Howie.

Howie (c.1565-c.1645), after graduating at King's College, in his native city of Aberdeen in 1584, proceeded with his friend, John Johnstone, to study on the Continent. Howie spent a year at Rostock, then three years at Herborn, and a similar period at Basel before returning to Scotland

in 1591. He taught and ministered in Aberdeen and Dundee, becoming the first principal of Marischal College, and then for the last thirty years of his life, he was principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews.[25]

At Herborn, Howie was the first Scottish pupil of Piscator and Olevianus who headed the newly founded Academy. On 25 March, 1587, he disputed his *Theses Philosophicae* in a wide range of subjects: rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, physics, ethics, economics, politics, history and law. The final subject was the crown, 'Theologicae Coronidis Loco', and the thesis which Howie defended was that 'The Word of God is the divine testimony concerning the covenant of grace, comprehending the canonical books of either testament'.[26]

Like Ursinus and Olevianus, Howie regarded Scripture and the corpus of Christian doctrine as covenantal revelation.[27] Two years after Howie defended his thesis, Johnston, writing to Piscator, complained that for Howie 'Theology existed in nothing other than the doctrine of the covenant'. He wished Piscator would consult Howie's work and consider whether this was exemplary, as he doubted if it was consistent with 'a true and legitimate method' of handling theology.[28]

Whatever Johnston or Piscator thought, Rollock thoroughly agreed with Howie. He introduced the theme of the covenant in this way in *De Vocatione* : 'Now, therefore, we are to speak of the Word, or of the Covenant of God, having first set down this ground, that all the word of God appertains to some covenant; for God speaks nothing to man without the covenant. For which cause all Scripture, both old and new, wherein all God's word is contained, bears the name of God's covenant or testament'.[29] He also concluded the work with a catechetical chapter enlarging on this equation of the word of God with the covenant. The gist of this was that God had revealed 'all his will, that is, the doctrine of both

covenants, of works and grace, unto mankind', first through his 'lively voice', and then in process of time through the Scriptures written by the apostles and prophets.[30]

In thus relating the covenants to Scripture, Rollock was not thereby implying that the covenant of works was solely identified with the patriarchal and prophetical writings of the Old Testament and the covenant of grace with the apostolic witness in the New. There may be differences 'in the clearness and perspicuity thereof', he said, but there was none whatsoever 'in the matter and substance' of the Testaments[31] All three kinds of promises made in the gospel, that is, those relating to the covenant of works, those of the covenant of grace and those with reference to the works of grace and regeneration, were to be found in the Old Testament as well as the New. Although discerned more dimly in the Old Testament, the faithful nevertheless also 'embraced Christ the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace', and were justified by faith 'ex pacto et promissione Dei'.[32]

In *Quaestiones et Responsiones*, when it was asked, 'Surely the covenant of grace was not also struck with the old church and people?', Rollock replied in the affirmative even though it was still obscure.[33] It was made with mankind after the fall - 'Adam made ane inkling of it, bot verie obscure'.[34] From Adam to Moses it was transmitted together with the terms of the covenant of works by the 'lively voice', until 'Moses wrote the word of both covenants'.[35] As the old 'visible church...which was from Adam to the Apostles' developed from infancy to 'a temperate age' so the revelation of the covenant became clearer. It reached 'a full measure of revelation' given in its 'manly or ripe age' at the coming of Christ and the apostles.[36] And those who wrote later did not 'set forth anything diverse or contrary' to the doctrine of their predecessors, but simply added 'more clear interpretations, as the morning star of the New Testament' approached and

appeared.[37]

Howie had the same emphasis on the unity and continuity of the covenant. Redemption or reconciliation with God was the grand theme of Scripture. It was known by various names, 'the *new covenant*, or the *covenant of grace*: that is, the *contract*, *obligation*, *pact*, also called the *marriage union*, or *testament*, and in short the *gospel*'.[38] There was but one, eternal covenant of grace to liberate men from the thaldom of Satan. It was made initally with Adam, renewed and confirmed with Abraham, then with David and with the faithful at the time of the Babylonian captivity.[39] Circumcision and baptism were the signs of admission to the covenant, but these changed and were constantly repeated whereas the covenant itself remained immutable. Baptism and the Lord's supper replaced circumcision and the Passover as signs of one and the same covenant.[40]

In *De Reconciliatione* Howie wrote two chapters on the unity and diversity of the Testaments, carefully explaining how the old covenant and ours were the same (Foedus antiquorum et nostrum idem esse), and in what respects they differed.[41] He followed the traditional Calvinian distinction between the substance and the administration of the covenant. The substance he regarded as reconciliation through the mediatorial work of Christ. Christ was the Mediator of the covenant without whom reconciliation was impossible for any man. All the faithful in the Old Testament were also reconciled with God through faith in him.[42]

Different signs were not the only manifestation of diversity in administration. The law played a more prominent part in the old administration. The types and shadows of the ceremonies and sacrifices were given a pedagogic role in portraying the covenant, therefore it tended to be more rigorous and obscure, while the full manifestation of the covenant was characterized by

sweetness and perspicuity.[43] In the New Testament there was a more abundant manifestation of grace and effusion of the Holy Spirit, and a clearer revelation since Christ was come in the flesh.[44] Also where the promises in the Old Testament were largely confined to the Jews and the land of Canaan, in the New they had a more spiritual and universal application.[45]

In the chapter on the diversity of administration Howie also explained the relationship of law and covenant. He distinguished between the *lex moralis* and the *lex ceremonialis*. The function of both was to point to Christ. The latter was given to the Jews, prefiguring Christ in types and shadows, and was fulfilled and abolished when Christ came.[46] But the moral law Howie equated with 'the covenant of creation', which God had made with Adam *pre lapsus*, and in which he promised eternal life upon condition of perfect obedience. This covenant, which reflected the righteousness of God, was not destroyed by the fall of man; rather it was reiterated by Moses in order that it might lead men to the covenant of grace.[47] It could no longer give life to fallen man since he could no longer keep it, but it was still called a covenant (*foedus legale*) by synecdoche in view of its purpose in relation to the covenant of grace.[48]

Quoting Augustine, Howie said that 'The law was given that grace might be sought. Grace was given, that the law might be fulfilled'.[49] Since no man could now fulfil the law, the *foedus legale* could no longer be a covenant of life for man to reach by his created strength. Justification by the works of the law was impossible, therefore the testimony of the law and the prophets was to justification by faith in Christ.[50] Christ came to render the perfect obedience and satisfaction which was required in the *foedus creationis* on man's behalf. The law now showed men their helplessness, so that 'with that knowledge they might flee for help to Christ, who fulfilled the law

for us'.[51] Christ's redemptive work, therefore, was basically a law work. He was undoing the work of the first Adam when he violated the *foedus legale*.[52]

Rollock had precisely the same view of the law covenant, except that he preferrred the term *foedus operum* where Howie used *foedus creationis* or *foedus legale*. But he made it clear that he was speaking about the same thing: 'The covenant of works, which may also be called a legal or natural covenant, is founded in nature, which by creation was pure and holy, and in the law of God, which in the first creation was engraven in man's heart'.[53]

It was exactly the same covenant that was repeated in the decalogue.[54] Rollock, however, stressed the entirely different relationship in which man stood to it on account of the fall. Before the fall the ground of this covenant was not the mediatorial work of Christ, as Adam had no need of a Mediator then to make reconciliation. He and God were friends, not enemies. Its ground lay in the nature of man, and its condition in the good works which proceeded from that nature. But the only nature that could attain life by that covenant was 'nature only in its first integrity', that is, nature 'beautified with holiness and righteousness...and perfectly good, as it was in the first creation'.[55]

When Rollock insisted that man's nature and not 'the grace of God in Christ' was the ground of the prelapsarian covenant, he was not thereby implying that grace had no place in that arrangement and positing a rigid priority of law over grace.[56] Care must be taken when saying, 'The grace of Christ was excluded from the first covenant' by Rollock, and it should be made clear what kind of grace it was to which he was referring.[57] It was reconciling grace that was unnecessary in Eden. But the Edenic nature of man was nevertheless a manifestation of God's grace. Rollock clearly distinguished and stated this twofold nature of grace. Explaining the execution of the decree

concerning man, he said it was 'first the creation of man, *of God's free grace*, after the image of his Creator, and to the praise of the same grace. Then after the fall of man followed the restitution of man, of God's free grace, in and by his Son Christ, to the glory of Christ his Son, and to the praise of the grace of God the Father'.[58]

The covenant of works still stood after the fall, but its function was different due to the change in man. It could only condemn fallen man, and that was its final end in the reprobate. But in the elect its condemnation became a 'preparative for the gospel', bringing a sense of sin and misery in order that they 'may be prepared to embrace the covenant of grace in Christ'.[59] Rollock then discussed how far the law or the covenant of works was abolished, and pointed out that it was impossible that it could be abolished in itself because it reflected the righteousness and justice of God himself: 'For the very same justice of God is unchangeable, and the law of God is the very image of divine justice; wherefore the law of God must abide for ever'.[60]

The answer to man's want of this original righteousness in relation to God lay in the covenant of grace. Christ the Mediator was the ground of the covenant of grace. In his humanity he was under the covenant of works and fulfilled all its requirements, subjecting himself to its condemnation and curse and thereby meriting eternal life. And all this he did not for himself, but on behalf of those who had breached the covenant of works and stood under the curse of the law and the wrath of God[61] In other words, he made satisfaction in the new covenant for the old covenant conditions.[62] The justice or righteousness which Christ obtained was then imputed to his people by faith, replacing the original justice they had lost in Adam, thereby justifying them before God.[63] For the elect the covenant of works was therefore abolished as far as its condemnation and curse were concerned.[64] It

remained however as 'the rule' of evangelical works in the life of the believer.[65]

The twin aspects of unilateral promise and bilateral application which have come to be seen in this research as a hallmark of Reformed covenantal thinking were also clearly enunciated by Howie and Rollock. Rollock's general definition of 'the covenant struck between God and man' in *Quaestiones et Responsiones* was 'Est quo Deus homini in promittit aliquod boni, sub conditione certa aliqua: homo autem conditionem accipit'.[66] In *Ad Romanos* he defined the 'some good' as 'the promise of grace'.[67]

Both covenants were conditional. The condition of the covenant of works was good works or perfect obedience to the law of God; the condition of the covenant of grace was 'Faith only'.[68] But the conditionality of this generic view of the covenant did not necessarily imply, as Letham stated, 'that the primary stress is...on the conditionalism of the covenant'.[69] The conditionalism was balanced by the preceding promise of grace, and in his exposition of the covenant of grace, Rollock deliberately underlined the importance of this before dealing with the question of conditions at all. The gospel or covenant of grace, he said, was entirely free. Its ground was the mediatorial work of Christ and 'God's free favour and mercy, and not nature, or any good thing in it, for that all our natural goodness, after the breach of that covenant of works, is quite vanished'.[70] Indeed, continued Rollock, 'The very name of the Covenant of Grace might seem to require no condition, for it is called a free covenant, because God freely, and, as it might seem, without all condition, doth promise both righteousness and life; for he which promiseth to give any thing freely, he bindeth not to any condition'.[71] This emphasis on the free, gratuitous, promissory nature of the covenant was something to which Rollock returned again and again, particularly in his treatment of justification.[72]

Rollock saw no absurdity in holding both these concepts in one covenant, for the simple reason that he considered the condition such as could 'stand with God's free grace in Christ Jesus'. The words 'grace' and 'freely' could admit the condition of faith because it was 'Faith only, which is also by grace (for it is God's free gift)'.[73] He went on to explain that the faith upon which God performed the condition of the covenant was not just faith apprehending Christ, but 'Christ himself, and God's mercy apprehended in him', so that 'these three are one in substance, the ground of the Covenant of Grace, the condition of it, and the cause wherefore God performeth the condition'.[74] Here again is evidence of the Reformed insistence on the inseparability of Christ and his benefits. Christ was actually identified with the faith by which he must be applied to his people and by which he must be embraced. In other words, the condition of the covenant to be exercised by the elect was contained in the ground and substance of the covenant itself.[75]

Howie likewise regarded the covenant as two-sided. In it there was 'the promise of grace: and the restipulation of a good conscience: that part from God, and this part from us'.[76] Further on, he included faith as 'the other part stipulated from us' by God.[77] But like Rollock, Howie also acknowledged the conditionalism of the covenant, or the part which God has stipulated to be played by man, as being freely gifted by God in the covenant. 'God himself', he said, 'freely confers on us this which he stipulates from us, and through the prophet Jeremiah said that he himself would write his law in our hearts, therefore it has come merely with regard to the promise of grace, with this restipulation itself being part of that grace'. In this way the covenant including its conditions was all of grace, its 'entire method is gratuitous', because God himself gave what he commanded and required of man.[78]

In his *De Communione Fidelium*, the essence of the thesis Howie disputed was the necessity of faith alone as the way to union and fellowship with Christ and to being partaker of his benefits in the covenant. Howie maintained that union with Christ was necessary to salvation.[79] This was because fellowship with Christ was brought about by faith alone, so that 'all who are without faith, do not have fellowship with Christ, and are alienated from God and his covenant, and therefore under condemnation'.[80]

In expounding the idea of faith as the essential condition to having 'κοινωνίαν cum Christo', and being partaker of all Christ's benefits, Howie had three main emphases: One was that there could be no separation of Christ and the benefits that spring from being justified through him.[81] The second was that while faith was required on the part of man in order to receive Christ and his benefits, this faith was wrought in man by the Holy Spirit. It was entirely the work of the Spirit to effect union with Christ. Man was unable to do so.[82] And thirdly, the gift of faith and the effectual work of the Spirit in uniting men with Christ was confined to the elect, as God's salvation was accomplished in the world for them.[83]

For Howie, then, faith and its fruits - good works, or living with 'a good conscience' in communion with Christ - were essential to salvation and required of men in the covenant. As such men were responsible for exercising faith and obedience, but there was no trace of merit attached to man's part in the covenant, as the creation of faith and the power to exercise it in obedience came solely from the regeneration of the Spirit.

Rollock was also a theologian of the Holy Spirit with respect to the condition of the covenant. The faith which he identified with Christ himself was not something inherent in humanity; it was a man's 'supernatural faith

applying to himself Christ Jesus the Mediator of the Covenant'.[84] Clarifying this, he declared, 'In the will or heart faith is a supernatural ability, put into it by the Spirit of Christ', and he proceeded to offer the following definition: 'Justifying faith in Christ, with all his benefits offered unto us in the Word and Sacraments, is not only a holy, but also a supernatural knowledge of the mind, and apprehension of the will'.[85]

Assurance was also related to this faith, because 'certainty is a gift of the Spirit regenerating, which is bestowed only upon the elect: I speak of true and sound special certainty, which is the property of true justifying faith'.[86] Rollock's preaching carried the same emphasis on the sovereignty of the Spirit in salvation. Man could take no credit for any part he played in it: 'Quhen he cummis on to the execution of that eternal purpose of our salvatioun, thair is na thing in us, bot all is of himself... Thou that takis ane part in it, and attributes it to thyself, thou spulzies (spoilest) God of his glorie'.[87]

In view of such statements it is difficult to see how anyone can conclude that because the promise was conditional for Rollock, 'Its fulfilment is dependent on factors that are present *in us*', and that because he related assurance to sanctification and good works 'This means that faith and assurance are separated'.[88] The confusion and ambiguity of Letham's interpretation of Rollock's doctrine of faith and assurance arises from a failure to recognize the unity and foundation of Rollock's thought in this matter.[89] For Rollock faith did not have to be related to the mind *or* the will; it was related to both. It did not have to be passive *or* active; it was given and it was to be exercised. Assurance was not related to faith divorced from its object, which was Christ and his benefits, but to all of these. Therefore, Rollock could speak of assurance as 'the property of true

justifying faith', and also of certainty arising from love, good works and sanctification without any sense or fear of contradiction.[90] And the ground of Rollock's position here, as for Howie, Perkins, and his other Reformed predecessors, was the utter inseparability of Christ and his benefits as the object of faith.[91]

Rollock considered justifying faith to be the only condition of the covenant of grace, as it was by faith that it was embraced and applied. The works of the regenerate, which were the holy fruits or the benefits of Christ promised to believers in the covenant of grace, he did not consider as 'contained in the condition of the covenant of grace'. This distinction Rollock based on a difference which he saw between the promise of the covenant of grace, and 'particular and special promises which are to be referred to the Covenant of Grace'. These promises were made concerning the 'works of grace and regeneration', which, while not conditions of the covenant of grace were nevertheless conditional.[92]

These works, Rollock said, 'proceed from grace and regeneration', and were therefore 'evangelical works', but because the moral law was their rule they could also be regarded in this sense as 'legal works'.[93] This did not mean that they were in any way meritorious or deserving of eternal life. They applied only to God's elect who were already 'justified, renewed, comforted, and quieted in their consciences', and enabled them to 'testify their thankfulness by their holy obedience and good works'.[94] They were 'required of believers, not as merits, but as duties only, and testimonies of their thankfulness to God their Redeemer'.[95] They were also acceptable and pleasing to God, and rewarded by God, but only 'as effects of the only merit of Jesus Christ, whereof they testify'. Perfect obedience to the law could never be attained by believers in this life, but the perfecting of their obedience was supplied in Christ.[96] Repentance came into

the same category. It also was the effect of faith, was wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and belonged only to the elect.[97]

While Rollock made this distinction between the promise of the covenant of grace under condition of faith, and the particular and special promises referring to the covenant of grace under condition of the works of grace and regeneration, in his explanation of their relationship he was in effect saying nothing new. The believer's works were the essential and necessary fruits of justifying faith. Justification and sanctification were never effectively separated by Rollock. One necessarily accompanied the other and both stemmed from the same source - the righteousness of Christ.[98] Like Calvin, Rollock saw these as the twofold benefits of salvation in the covenant. He said, 'There be two benefits necessary in reconciling us to God, which selfe same thinges, God promiseth to us in the free covenant, to wit forgiveness of sinnes and regeneration; and both are obtained in Christ'.[99] Good works were only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit, and only acceptable through the justification of Christ's merits.[100] The continuing function of the law in the life of the believer was not a covenant of life, but a duty of life, expressing the image of divine justice, and a spirit of gratitude to God as Redeemer.[101]

Rollock's reasons for making this distinction were twofold: One was to avoid the possibility of anyone considering the works of the unregenerate as good, as it was with them that the covenant was made. Secondly, he thought it necessary to differentiate between the promise and the condition of the covenant. As the promise included all the benefits of Christ for the believer, including good works, Rollock felt it should not be regarded as a condition.[102] In short, it appears that he wanted to refrain from calling works of any kind a condition of the covenant of grace so that they would not

be regarded as antecedent conditions and thereby confused with the covenant of works. But at the same time Rollock still had to regard the believer's works as proceeding from the covenant of grace, and to view them as the conditions under which the particular and special promises referred to in the covenant were inherited. There was, therefore, little, if any, difference in substance from the theology of those who considered the good works of the believer as consequent conditions of the covenant, because they were necessary and essential fruits of the faith by which men entered into covenantal relationship with God.

It will not have gone unnoticed how Rollock and Howie both confined the effectual application of the covenant and its benefits to 'God's elect'. The doctrine of election permeated all their writings and sermons, but in addition both wrote specific treatises which presented strong predestinarian views of a double and supralapsarian nature.

At Basel Academy on 25 February, 1591, Howie defended a paper entitled *De Aeterna Dei Praedestinatione Aphorismi Theologici*. Howie defined predestination as God's eternal decree (est aeternum Dei decretum) concerning man. Its sole cause lay in the will and good pleasure of God, who chose to manifest the glory of his name in his creatures.[103] This he did in two ways - 'Hinc Praedestinatio duplex est: *Electio et Reprobatio*'. He chose to glorify his mercy and love in the salvation of the elect, and to glorify his justice in the damnation of the reprobate. Man's primal condition, his fall and his corruption through sin were all included in this decree.[104]

Like his Reformed predecessors Howie did not separate predestination and Christ. The predestination of the elect to eternal life was in Christ in order to declare the glory of God's mercy. The reprobate were rejected and excluded from fellowship with Christ to the glory of God's justice.[105] Christ was both the cause of election and the means by which it was effected or executed in his

mediatorial work.[106] The salvation in Christ to which the elect were predestinated was realized through their '*Calling, Justification, Sanctification,* which Paul called *Glorification*', or as they were all generally known, through *regeneration.*'[107].

Calling represented 'the first step' (est primus gradus), and was of great importance because the elect who were called constituted the *ecclesia.*[108] Calling came through the ministry of the Word and the sacraments, but not all who experienced these or the external operation of the Holy Spirit were necessarily elect.[109] Howie distinguished between external and internal calling. The former was universal, but the latter was 'special or effective calling' and this pertained only to the elect.[110] It was only from effectual calling that faith sprang, and it was the faith of the elect which brought justification, sanctification and all other benefits, and which constituted the true fellowship of the church.[111] Howie did not expound the doctrine of the covenant in *De Praedestionatione*, but in *De Reconciliatione* he made it abundantly clear that it was those who were elected and effectually called who were truly in the covenant of grace. They knew not only the administration of the covenant signs, but also the substance to which the signs testified.[112] The purpose of the decree of election and the end of the covenant of grace were the same - 'Gloria misericordiae Dei'.[113]

Rollock's treatise, *De Aeterna Mentis Divinae Approbatione et Improbatione*, also located the decree in the will of God.[114] It had a clear double form: 'the predestination of particular creatures to eternal life' and 'the predestination of particular creatures to eternal death'.[115]

In his *Lectures upon First Thessalonians*, Rollock underlined that these two ordinances - some to life and some to death and hell - were from all eternity, before

creation and life itself. Nor was the latter a case of 'naked permission' merely, for 'the Lord has decreed it to be done by himselfe'.[116] There was no ambiguity about Rollock's preaching concerning the reprobate. They were not chosen to life. They were not given to Christ by the Father. Christ 'died not for anie reprobate', and consequently he did not make intercession for them. Judas was an example of such.[117] From all such the gospel was hidden: 'That perditioun and destruction quhairunto thou is appointed fra all eternitie, is the cause quhairfoir thou receivis na consolatiouns, na licht in thy saul throch the gospell of Jesus Christ'.[118] But blame for the damnation of the reprobate was not attributable to God - 'the wyte [blame] is in zour blindnes that ar appointed to damnation'. God was not the author of sin.[119]

Rollock also distinguished between the decree and its execution. God decreed not only the end of the elect, but also the means to the end, that is, 'by means of Christ Jesus'.[120] Christ was the Mediator decreed from all eternity, and his people were elected in him to salvation.[121] Redemption through the covenant of grace in Christ, bringing remission of sins, calling, justification, sanctification and glorification, was included in the 'executione Praedestinationis', and all was 'ex Dei gratia'.[122]

'In respect of grace', Rollock said, 'there is no difference between those benefits of God that were begun before all worlds, as his prescience and predestination, and those which are in time, as our vocation, justification, glorification'.[123] As far as election was concerned, the decree and its execution were all of grace.[124] The gospel itself was 'that wisdome and doctrin that God predestinat fra al eternitie'.[125] As with Perkins, Rollock described all the benefits of the gospel as 'the links, as it were, of that fine Golden Chaine, which Paul linketh together'.[126] This was the reason why,

when he came to discussing predestination at chapter 8:29-30 in *Ad Romanos*, he launched into a lengthy eighty-page excursus covering the benefits of the gospel, before quietly resuming his exposition of verse thirty-one.[127]

There is one place in Rollock's writings, a chapter 'Concerning the Free Grace of God', in *De Vocatione*, which has a reference to predestination capable of a prelapsarian interpretation. Here he placed the decree to glorify Christ before the decree concerning the creation of man.[128] But Rollock went on to say that in the execution of the decree 'the decree of God concerning man hath the first place... Then after the fall of man, followed the restitution of man...in and by his Son Christ... Therefore the execution of the decree concerning Christ the Son of God, which was first, falleth now as it were in the midst of the repairing of mankind, or of the execution of the decree concerning man's redemption'.[129] This passage in no way detracts from the overwhelming supralapsarian character of Rollock's predestinarianism, and lends no weight to the idea of his covenantal thought being entirely conditional and bilateral.

The concept of twofold election also emerged in Rollock's works. He distinguished between those who were among God's people outwardly, and those who were inwardly circumcised.[130] Not all who heard the promise and were offered gospel grace, received the special grace of the Spirit of Christ. The Holy Spirit applied Christ and his benefits effectively only to the elect, or 'that special and particular man whom he inwardly teacheth'.[131] It was possible for hypocrites and reprobates to be in the visible church, partaking outwardly of the signs of the covenant, to manifest a temporary faith and make some show of repentance, but yet not be truly in saving, covenantal relationship with God.[132] On the other hand, those who were truly in the covenant of grace, 'the chosen of God, they stand fast, they are placed without all danger of

defection and falling away', and that by an unalterable decree.[133]

Conclusion

It is fairly obvious that the covenantal thought of these early Scottish theologians stands in the mainstream of Reformed theological tradition with its headwaters in Geneva, flowing through Heidelberg and Elizabethan Puritanism. There is no work of Knox which gives an adequate view of his position on the subject, but what there is reveals no major divergence from the pattern that has been emerging in this study. Howie and Rollock provide a clearer exposition of the doctrine, and a comparision of their works presents a picture similar to the the relationship between the theology of Olevianus and that of Ursinus.

Olevianus was undoubtedly Howie's mentor in covenantal thought, with little evidence of direct influence from other sources. There is the same recognition and teaching on the two-sided nature of the covenant. There were both unilateral and bilateral aspects but with a stronger emphasis on the unilateral feature. Rollock had cast a much wider net, displaying acquaintance with a greater range of theologians. It is a mistake to give the impression that his covenantal thought came solely from one source, that is, through Howie. Howie did send an outline of one of his earlier theses, *ΧΡΙΣΤΕ ΕΥΌΔΩΣΟΝ*, to Rollock.[134] While there was no mention of the covenant in this brief document, it is safe to assume that the later theses reached him as well, probably through Johnston who was a mutual friend. Rollock's thought, however, has more of the breadth and general tone of Ursinus' works, with the added influence of Genevan and English Puritan sources.

It would be equally wrong to overlook native influences on Rollock. Presumably he had some knowledge

of Knox's writings, but more importantly there was the contemporary influence and popularity of John Craig's *Short Sum of the Whole Catechism* (1581).[135] Craig (c1512-1600), a former Dominican and a colleague of Knox, had been converted through the reading of Calvin's *Institutes*. He was the king's chaplain from 1579-1594, in charge of the Church of Holyroodhouse, and therefore in close proximity to Rollock.[136] The widespread nature of Craig's influence is evidenced in the fact that his *Ane Shorte and Generale Confession of the true Christian Fayth and Religion* (1581) was required to be signed by all parish ministers and then by all graduates in 1585. This ruling was confirmed in 1590 and 1595. His work was said to form the basis of the National Covenant (1638) and the Solemn League and Covenant (1643).[137]

In the preface Craig recommended the *Institutes* as further reading that would confirm the scriptural nature of his teaching.[138] The *Catechism* carried practically all the basic presuppositions underlying covenantal theology, including the gracious, but conditional, legal nature of the Edenic arrangement;[139] the law as an expression of the will and nature of God and the fall of man as incurring its penalty and curse;[140] the work of Christ as making satisfaction to the justice and demands of the law for the faithful;[141] the continuing use of the law as 'a rule of all godliness' and the conditional nature of faith and Christian duty;[142] the execution of God's eternal decree bringing to the elect only the benefits of the covenant through faith given by the power of the Holy Spirit.[143] And all this, Craig confirmed, was in one covenant of salvation in Christ since the protoevangelion. 'How did Adam and his posterity receive the promise?' he asked, and the answer was 'Only through their own lively faith in Christ'. Then a little further on: 'Was the faith and religion of the fathers different from our faith?

A. Not in substance but in certain circumstances.

Q. What is the substance?

A. The covenant of Jesus Christ'.[144]

Again, Andrew Melville (1545-1622) taught similar covenantal doctrine at Rollock's *alma mater*. One of his continental students, Daniel Demetrius, copied Melville's *Commentarius in Divinam Pauli Epistolam ad Romanos* to take home to Frankenthal, near Heidelberg.[145] In this work, too, the pre-Siniatic function of the law was stressed,[146] with the twofold revelation of the covenant.[147] The work of Christ was interpreted in relation to the violation of the law by Adam and his posterity, and the external and internal administrations of the sacramental signs of the covenant were explained.[148]

The legacy of covenantal thought received by Rollock was passed on to his students. Charles Ferme (1566-1617) wrote another *Analysis Logica in Epistolam Apostoli Pauli ad Romanos*.[149] Having graduated under Rollock in 1587, Ferme taught for a time in Edinburgh University, but removed to Fraserburgh in 1597 to take charge of a short-lived University being founded there by Sir Alexander Fraser of Philorth.[150] He was imprisoned and banished for three years after a tussle with the Episcopalian party, but returned to Fraserburgh in 1609 where he taught until his death eight years later.[151]

Ferme's theology reflected that of his teacher, but Genevan influences emerged strongly in his work. He used Beza's translation of the New Testament, and, after the manner of Calvin, he regarded 'τὸ γνωστὸν του θεου' in creation as having a significant place in God's revelation to man.[152] This knowledge was related to the law of God which man had by nature before it was verbalized by Moses.[153] Like Calvin, too, Ferme saw the *post lapsus* use of the law 'to augment sin' (ad augendum peccatum) as 'accidental'.[154] He distinguished the moral, ceremonial and judicial aspects of law, and equated the moral law with the *foedus operum*: 'The first of these, the moral law, the

apostle calls the covenants, because it contains the condition of the covenant of works, and he says covenants in the plural, not covenant, because the violation of one precept is the violation of the entire conditions, as if the many precepts of the law were so many covenants or conditions of the covenant of works, which if not all fully performed by anyone, that person could expect nothing from the covenant of works but the curse and execration of the law'.[155] The redemptive work of Christ, therefore, Ferme interpreted in terms of the second Adam coming to undo all that the first Adam had done in his disobedience to the first covenant. This involved a life of perfect obedience to the law and making satisfaction to the justice of God on man's behalf for the violated law.[156]

For Ferme, the one covenant of grace embraced the Old Testament faithful as well as the New Testament believers. They too had the promises, which Ferme understood as 'the work of faith and the covenant of grace', which were promised in various ways to Israel, but made fully known in the gospel.[157] The covenant of grace proper was not made with all Israel or the church 'according to the flesh'. Many had the 'outward ministration' of the covenant merely, without the inward grace.[158] Those who were spiritual had 'the internal grace of faith and sanctification', while those who had only 'the letter' simply had what was 'external and visible to every one, whether it be natural descent, or the common profession [of religion], and participation in its external services'.[159] Justifying faith distinguished between those in the visible and those in the invisible church, but initially the distinction was based on the divine decree of election and rejection. The invisible church would always be received and preserved 'according to gratuitous election' (secundum electionem gratuitam).[160]

Thus the influence of these early covenantal theologians was transmitted throughout the Scottish Church

- and beyond. Attention has already been drawn to the fact that two Scotsmen who had studied at St. Andrews were Ussher's tutors for five years in Dublin.[161] It is not surprising then that Rollock is listed as one of the authors in the early Trinity College Library, providing another link in a remarkable chain of like-minded Calvinistic covenantal influences making their contribution in the communication of theological thought leading to the compilation of the Westminster standards.[162]

NOTES: Chapter Nineteen

1 R. Rollock, *Quaestiones et Responsiones Aliquot de Foedere Dei: deque Sacramento quod Foederis Dei sigillum est*, (Edinburgh, 1596); *Tractatus de Vocatione Efficaci, quae into locos Theologiae communissimos recensetur, deque locis specialioribus, qui sub vocatione comprehenduntur*, (Edinburgh, 1597). The latter work was translated by H. Holland, *A Treatise of Gods Effectual Calling*, (London, 1603), and is available in *Select Works of Robert Rollock*, 2 vols. ed. W.M. Gunn, (Edinburgh, 1844, 1849), 1.1-288.

2 The only account of Rollock's life is a short sketch written immediately after his death by George Robertson, *Vitae et mortis Roberti Rolloci Scoti narratio*, (Edinburgh, 1599). Henry Charteris, Rollock's successor, revised this a little in *Narratio Vitae et Obitus Sanctissimi Doctissimique Viri D. Roberti Rolloci, Scoti, Ministri Evangelii et Rectoris Academiae Edinburgensis*, but his manuscript remained unpublished until both were printed by the Bannatyne Club under the title, *De Vita et Morte Roberti Rollok, Academiae Edinburgenae primarii, Narrationes*, (Edinburgh, 1826). Charteris' account with a translation is reprinted in *Select Works*, 1.xxxix-lxxxvii. Historical works with reference to Rollock's career include: Calderwood, *History*, 5.104 *passim*; 6.67,80,589; 8.47-48; Row, *History*, 159,181,203,419,436,467-470; Spottiswood, *History*, 3.58,77-78; J. Melville, *Diary*, 86,300,415,438,528; McCrie, *Life of Melville*, 1.254; 2.118,487; Scot, *Fasti*, 1.37, 45; T.F. Henderson, *DNB*, 49.171-173. Works commenting on Rollock's covenantal thought include: G.D.Henderson, *Burning Bush*, 68; Letham, 'Saving Faith ', 1.270-276; Burrell, 'Covenant as a Revolutionary Symbol', 341; Bruggink, 'Calvin and Federal Theology', 15-16; Ishbell, 'The Origin', 44-50; Karlberg, 'Reformed Interpretation', 22; Williamson, *Scottish National Consciousness*, 71, 75-79.

3 For a complete list of Rollocks works see Bibliography. Those not in translation are *Quaestiones et Responsiones*, *De Aeterna mentis Divinae Approbatione et Improbatione*, and the commentaries on Daniel, John, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians and Hebrews. J.C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, St. John*, (1877), 1.xiii, wrote, 'Of our old writers, Rollock, the Scotch divine, is incomparably the best. In fact, I do not know such "a buried treasure" as his Latin commentary on St. John'. Over a century later it is still buried.

4 T. Crauford, *History of the University of Edinburgh From 1580-1646*, (Edinburgh, 1808), 23ff; A. Bower, *The History of the University of Edinburgh*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh, 1817), 74ff; A. Dalzel, *History of the University of*

Edinburgh, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1862), 2.11-12, 30-36, 331-334, 343-374; A. Grant, *The Story of the University of Edinburgh during its First Three Hundred Years*, 2 vols. (London, 1884), 1.132ff; 2.238-242; J. Kirk, 'Clement Little's Edinburgh', *Edinburgh University Library 1580-1980: A Collection of Historical Essays*, eds. J.R. Guild and A. Law, (Edinburgh, 1982), 34ff.

5 *A Catalogue of the Graduates in the Faculties of Arts, Divinity, and Law of the University of Edinburgh since its Foundation*, (Edinburgh, 1858), 7, 8, 9, 11, 12; cf. I.H. Murray, *The Puritan Hope*, (London, 1971), 21-22.

6 Rollock, *Select Works*, 1.23-28. See Gunn's comparison with the WCF, (*ibid.*, 1.xii-xiii); cf. Beza, *Quaestionum et Responsionum*, (Geneva, 1573, 1580).

7 Gunn, ed. *Select Works*, 2.xiii-xiv.

8 *Ibid.*, 1.xi,xiii,xv,169,217,196; 2.xiii.

9 Charteris, in *Ibid.*, 1.lxv, lxxxix.

10 Rollock, *Lectures Upon the History of the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ*, (Edinburgh, 1616), repr.in *Select Works*, vol.2; Beza, *Sermons sur l'Histoire de la Passion et Sepulture de nostre Signeur Iesus Christ*, ([Geneva], 1592) and *Sermons sur l'Histoire de la Resurrection de nostre Signeur Iesus Christ*, (Geneva, 1593); Calvin, *Sermons touchant la Divinitie, Humanitie, et Nativité de nostre Siegneur Iesus Christ: Item touchant sa passion, mort, resurrection, ascension et dernier advenement*, (Geneva, 1558). See *CR.*, 35.593-594.

11 Note the same structure and method of presentation as well as linguistic and descriptive parallels: eg. the account of the disciples on the road to Emmaus and the three appearances of our Lord, (Beza, *Ser.sur Resur.*, 186-306; Rollock, *Select Works*, 2.428-490); description of Christ's burial, (Beza, *Ser.sur Pass.*, 1023-1058; Rollock, 2.292-317); contrast of treatment of bodies of beasts and men and use of same biblical references, Joseph and Acts 7:37 (Beza, 1054-1055; Rollock, 2.315-316); description of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (Beza, 1033ff; Rollock, 2.297ff); use of the unusual phrase 'the force of Christ's death', which Calvin also used (Beza, 1032-1033; Rollock, 2.303; Calvin, *Com.on John*, 19:38).

12 *Select Works*, 1.7-12; cf. 1.lxxii-lxxiii; 2.v-vii, xiii; Robertson, *De Vita et Morte*, 11-12; J.K. Cameron, ed. *Letters of John Johnston c.1565-1611 and Robert Howie c.1565-c.1645*, (Edinburgh, 1963), 331-334.

13 Letham, 'Foedus Operum', 466-467.

14 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 1.21-28.

15 Charteris, 'Narrative', in *Sel. Works*, 1.lxvi.

16 Grant, *The Story of the University*, 82, 153. Bower, *History of the University*, 1.88-89, 103, stresses more the teaching of Ramus, but adds 'although he entertained the greatest abhorrence at the Aristotelian logic, his writings are composed after that manner'. Crauford, *History of the University*, 44-45, says, 'He was of emminent knowledge in the dogmatick philosophie of Aristotle... He esteemed also much of Ramus his Dialectick, and hardly any man hath made better use thereof'. Dalzel, *History*, 2.31, merely repeats this.

17 Letham, 'Foedus Operum', 467.

18 Scott Pearson, *Cartwright*, 194.

19 *STC*, 1.480; Aldis, *List of Books*, Nos. 230,231. The works were *The Groundes of Religion*, and *Certain Godly and Learned Treatises*.

20 *STC*, 2.227-228; Aldis, *List*, Nos. 233.5,234,244.

21 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 1.62; Perkins, *Com.on Gal.*, 4:24-25 (2.347).

22 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 1.203-211; Perkins, *Exp.of Sym.*, 1.125-126; *Cloud of Wit.*,3.1-2; *Com.on Rev.*, 2:4 (3.271).

23 *Ibid.*, 1.246-248; cf. Perkins, *Est.of Damnation*, 1.356-362; 362ff; *Two Treatises*, 1.452-467.

24 Charteris, in *Sel. Works*, 1.lxvi. Ursinus' *Compendium* was published in Oxford, 1585. It was translated in 1587 and had seen three editions and Parry's new translation by 1591. It was widely available in Scotland, see Henderson, *The Burning Bush*, 67; Also W.L. Alexander, 'Life of Ferme' in C. Ferme, *A Logical Analysis of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, trs. W. Skae, (W.Soc. Edinburgh, 1580). xii.

25 For details of Howie's career, see Cameron, ed. *Letters of Johnston and Howie*, 'Intro.', xiii-lxxxiv; Calderwood, *History*, 5.616, 684, 701; 6.2, *passim*; 7.27, *passim*; Row, *History*, 249,269; Spottiswoode, *History*, 3.190; Melville, *Diary*, 549, 659, 684, 749, 760, 770, 788; McCrie, *Life of Melville*, 2.276, 278-280.

26 Howie, *Theses Philosophicae*, (Herborn, 1587), 6 (unpaginated) 'Verbum Dei est testimonium divinum de foedere gratuito, canonicis utriusque testamenti libris comprehensum'.

27 *Infra*, 2.120, 145.

28 'Letters of John Johnston' X, Heidelberg, 8 Sept., 1589, in Cameron, ed. *Letters*, 36 'Volo, conferas cum Hovaei tabula, si modo ejus examplar habes. Is nimis arctam viam Theologiae ingressus, et nimis angustos ejus fines ponere mihi videtur. Theologiam existimat nihil aliud esse quam Doctrinam de fodere. Totque ejus partes facit, quot sunt foederis. At quis non videt Theologiam multo esse ampliorem? Quo sit, ut tota deductio ex illo

principio videatur vitiosa et in ea multa abhorrentia a vera et legitima Methodo'.

29 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 1.33-34.

30 *Ibid.*, 1.274-288; cf. 1.61-63, 70-71, 76-77, 85-90.

31 *Ibid.*, 1.287.

32 *Ibid.*, 1.46; *Ad Romanos*, 4:1-8 (53); cf. 1:8-17 (10-12); *Ad Galatas*, 3:6-14 (52,54); 3:23-29 (67-72); 4:19-31 (86-93); *Ad Hebraeos*, 11:4-40 (157-181); *Exp.on Psalmes*, 32:1-7 (136-137); 116:7-9 (429); *Five and Twentie Lect.*, 76 'All the godly men and women before Christ...believed. So the predictions of Christ in all time wrought fayth in the heartes of the Fathers of olde'.

33 *Quaest.et Resp.*, A5b 'Q. An fuit etiam cum veteri ecclesia et populo percussum foedus gratiae? R. Fuit: etsi obscura eius fuerit mentio in doctrina foederis operum et legis'; cf. *Ad Hebraeos*, 8:7-13 (107).

34 *Sel. Works*, 1.370; *Quaest.et Resp.*, B4b.

35 *Ibid.*, 1.59, 61-62; *Quaest.et Resp.*, B5a-b.

36 *Ibid.*, 1.276, 278, 281-282; cf. 1.89-91; 2.294, 392-393; *Exp.on Psalmes*, 42:1-5 (235); *Com.in Pet.*, 1:10-12 (14a-18b); *Ad Danielis*, 2:37-43 (51).

37 *Ibid.*, 1.62-63.

38 Howie, *De Reconciliatione Hominis cum Deo*, (Basel, 1591), 14, 'Totum hoc opus Reconciliationis nostrae cum Deo, *Redemptio nostra* dicitur, item *Foedus novum* seu *foedus gratuitum*: id est, *contractus, obligatio, pactum*, item *Coniugium*, item *Testamentum* dicitur, denique et *Evangelium*, quod eius annuntiatio gratissima sit et plena gaudii'; cf. Ursinus, *infra*, 2.127.

39 *Ibid.*, 17, 19, 'Foedus Dei gratuitum esse aeternum, et unum... Dicitur hoc foedus unum, quia unica et sola ratio qua homines ex tyrannide Satanae, et servitute peccari liberantur; et quod nulli unquam alia ratione servati sint, quam per hanc Dei misericordiam, quae in hoc foedere et contractu gratuito, conspicitur. Ideo hoc foedus cum Adamo initum, cum Abrahamo repetitur et confirmatur. Sic cum Davide, sic cum fidelibus apud Ieremiam tempore captivitatis Babylonicae: Non autem nova et diversa foedera de salute humani generis sanctiuntur et eriguntur'; cf. *De Iustificatione Hominis Coram Deo*, (Basel, 1590), B4a, where he speaks of circumcision as the sign of justification by faith.

40 *Ibid.*, 19, 21, 34-35; cf. *De Iustificatione*, B3a, B4b-B5a.

41 *Ibid.*, 19-35, 'Foedus hoc Dei, adiunctorum diverso respectu distingui in Vetus et Novum Testamentum, deque

utriusque convenientia', and 'De diversitate Veteris et Novi foederis seu Testamenti'.

42 *Ibid.*, 20-21, 'Fundamentum foederis fuisse Christum Mediatorem certum est. Siquidem a nobis demonstratum est, Deum non posse homines recipere in gratiam nisi per Mediatorem. Christum autem esse illum Mediatorem eumque solum, infra ex eius persona et officio demonstrabitur... Propter Christum enim tantum hominibus [ie. Gentiles and Jews] benefecit Deus'.

43 *Ibid.*, 27, 'Et quidem haec paedagogia, et aspera satis fuit et obscura. At contra plena illa gratuiti foederis manifestatio, quam Evangelium vocamus et suavis est perspicua'.

44 *Ibid.*, 29, 32, 30-31.

45 *Ibid.*, 33-34.

46 *Ibid.*, 26, 29-30, 31, 98-106.

47 *Ibid.*, 27, 'Lex Moralis nihil aliud est quam foedus creationis, quo foedere Deus stipulatur a nobis perfectam obedientiam et quidem ex nostris viribus, quippe cum satis magnas nobis in prima creatione dederit: et praestatibus eam promittit vitam aeternam. Hoc foedus creationis, quia Deus suo iure per hominis lapsum non exciderat, repetiit per Moysen, sed in hunc finem de quo sequitur' [ie. to point to the covenant of grace].

48 *Ibid.*, 27; cf. *De Iustificatione*, A2a-b.

49 *Ibid.*, 28, 'Lex data est, ut gratia quaereretur. Gratia data est, ut Lex impleretur'.

50 *De Iustificatione*, A2b, B3b-B4b.

51 *De Reconciliatione*, 28-29, 'Legem a se praestari non posse, nihil dicunt; neque enim Deus ius suum in nos propter nostrum lapsum, amisit. Cur non potius cum id agnoscant, ad Christum confugiunt, qui Legem pro nobis implevit'.

52 *De Iustificatione*, B5a.

53 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 34; cf. 175; *Ad Romanos*, 2:1-16 (25-26); *Ad Hebraeos*, 8:7-13 (104-110); *Quaest.et Resp.*, A3b-4b.

54 *Quaest.et Resp.*, A4a, A5a, A6b; *Sel. Works*, 34.

55 *Sel. Works*, 34-35; *Quaest. et Resp.*, A3b-4a 'Conditio est operum bonorum quae ex natura bona, sancta, et integra in qua fundatum est foedus ipsum operum'.

56 *Ibid.*, 34; ct. Letham, 'Saving Faith', 272-273.

57 Ishbell, 'The Origin', 46-47. Isbell speaks of the 'grace of Christ' but does not distinguish sufficiently between the nature of grace before and after the fall.

58 *Ibid.*, 267 (itals. mine).

59 *Ibid.*, 242; 36-37, 46-47; *Quaest.et Resp.*, A5b 'Q. Quo sine post lapsum hominis repititum est veteri ecclesiae et populo, cum post lapsum conditio bonorum operum naturae homini sit impossibilis? *R.* Non eo sine praecipue ut homines per illud iustificarentur et viverent: sed ut conuicti conscientiis, et impossibili illa conditione operum naturae bonorum pressi confugerent ad foedus gratiae. *Q.* At non omnes erant praeparati, neque confugiebant ad foedus gratiae? *R.* Verum: sed electi erant praeparati, reprobi vero tandem redacti erant in desperationem'.

60 *Ibid.*, 37.

61 *Ibid.*, 40-41, 52-54; *Quaest.et Resp.*, A7a-B1b.

62 *Ad Romanos*, 8:19-39 (161-162).

63 *Sel. Works*, 39, 54-55; *Ad Romanos*, 3:20-30 (45); 8:19-39 (137); *Ad Ephesios*, 2:11-13 (75ff); *Ad Galatas*, 2:15-16 (39); *Lect.on Col.*, 1:20 (66-77); *Quaest.et Resp.*, B1a-B2a.

64 *Ibid.*, 37, 49, 50-51.

65 *Ibid.*, 37, 42-43, 47-48,50-51; *Quaest.et Resp.*, B8a-b.

66 *Quaest.et Resp.*, A3a, 'Q. Quid est foedus Dei cum homine percussum? *R.* It is that by which God promises some good to man, under some specific condition; and man accepts the condition'; cf. *Sel. Works*, 34.

67 *Ad Romanos*, 8:19-39 (161).

68 *Sel. Works*, 35, 40; cf. *Quaest.et Resp.*, A3b-4a; B2a-B3a; *Ad Ephesios*, 1:15-18 (40), 'Nam Evangelium offert salutem sub conditione fidei'; Howie, *De Reconciliatione*, 15-16.

69 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.272.

70 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 38.

71 *Ibid.*, 39; *Quaest.et Resp.*, B4b 'Q. Cur appelatur foedus gratuitum? *R.*, Quia conditio foederis vel nulla est, vel certe gratuita tota est'.

72 *Ibid.*, 50-51, 55ff, 265-273; *Quaest.et Resp.*, A5b-A6b, B1b; *Ad Romanos*, 2:1-16 (25-26; 4:1-8 (53); 8:19-39 (175) 'foedus hoc fundatum in gratia Dei sola'; *Ad Galatas*, 3:15-22 (58-59); 5:1-6 (96); *Ad Hebraeos*, 6:12-18 (66-68,71-73).

73 *Ibid.*, 39-40; cf. 269; *Ad Romanos*, 8:19-39 (146). In this connection note also Rollock's interchangeable use of *foedus* and *testamentum* in *Ad Hebraeos*, 7:20-28 (92); 9:13-23 (120-126); 12:3-24 (210).

74 *Ibid.*, 40; cf. *Ad Romanos*, 8:19-39 (161,174-175); *Quaest.et Resp.*, B3a.

75 *Ibid.*, 41.

76 Howie, *De Reconciliatione*, 15-16, 'Unde foederis gratia duae partes a Theologis constitui solent, promissio gratiae: et restipulatio bonae conscientiae: illa ex parte Dei, haec ex nostra'.

77 *Ibid.*, 21, 'Deus enim ex altera parte fidem a nobis stipulatur, sine qua impossible est adhaerere Deo'.

78 *Ibid.*, 16, 'sed quia Deus hoc ipsum quod a nobis stipulatur, liberaliter nobis confert, et per Ieremiam prophetam dicit se ipsum inscripturum Leges suas cordibus nostris, ideo uendiendum est ad promissionem gratiae tantum, cum haec ipsa restipulatio pars sit illius gratiae.

Itaque foedus hoc, omnibus modis est gratuitum. Nam quod Deus se nobis donat, id gratis facit: et quod nos contra praestamus, quicquid id sit, ex ipso est'.

79 *De Communione Fidelium cum Christo ΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΙΑ*, (Basel, 1590), A2a.

80 *Ibid.*, A4a.

81 *Ibid.*, A2b-3b.

82 *Ibid.*, A2a.

83 *Ibid.*, A2b, A3b; cf. *De Reconcilatione*, 95-98; *De Iustificatione*, B5b.

84 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 195; cf. *Five and Twentie Lect.*, 88-89.

85 *Ibid.*, 201-202, 269; *Ad Ephesios*, 1:11-14 (37-38); 4:3-6 (141ff); *Ad Galatas*, 4:1-7 (79); *Com.in Pet.*, 1:22-25 (28a-31a).

86 *Ibid.*, 220; cf. 217-218, 233, 270, 272, 275; *Lect.on II Thess.*, 3:1-3 (124-125).

87 *Ibid.*, 443, cf. 448, 378-390, 512-528; cf. *In Evang.Iohn.*, 3:3-8 (135-146); *Five and Twentie Lect.*, 45-46, 96-97, 132, 152.

88 Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.275.

89 *Ibid.*, 1.273-275.

90 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 276ff; *Ad Ephesios*, 12.

91 *Ibid.*, 196, 202, etc.; cf. Perkins, *infra*, 2.209ff.

92 *Ibid.*, 41-42; *Quaest.et Resp.*, B4a-b.

93 *Ibid.*, 42; cf. *Five and Twentie Lect.*, 107ff.

94 *Ibid.*, 43; cf. 36-37; *Ad Ephesios*, 2:8-10 (70-72); 4:1 (134-135); *Five and Twentie Lect.*, 59-60; Exp.on Psalmes, 116:7-9 (429; 116:12-19 (445-447).

95 *Ibid.*, 44.

96 *Ibid.*, 45-46; *Ad Hebraeos*, 6:9-10 (61-64).

97 *Ibid.*, 238-245.

98 *Ibid.*, 44, 447-448; *Five and Twentie Lect.*, 35, 89-92, 100, 237-238; *Ad Philemonem*, 365; *Exp.on Psalmes*, 32:1-7 (156); *Lect.on 1 Thess.*, 4:6-9 (184); *Com.in Pet.*, 1:1-2 (6b-7b); 2:11-12 (43a-45a).

99 *Exp.on Psalmes*, 51:1-19 (352 for 368, err.in pag); cf. Calvin, *infra*, 1.365-366.

100 *Sel. Works*, 202.

101 *Ibid.*, 42-43, 45, 47-48, 50-51; *Lect.on 1 Thess.*, 4:16-18 (226).

102 *Ibid.*, 41.

103 Howie, *De Aeterna Dei Praedestinatione Aphorismi Theologici*, (Basel, 1591), 7 (Refs.to Aphorisims. No pag.) 'Praedestinationis causa est Dei voluntas sue beneplacitum, in seipsum, non extra se respiciens, volens gloriam nominis sue ita manifestari in creaturis suis'; cf. 20; *De Iustificatione*, B6a.

104 *Ibid.*, 8-10.

105 *Ibid.*, 11-12, 15.

106 *Ibid.*, 19; 20.1; *De Reconciliatione*, 36-37.

107 *Ibid.*, 36.

108 *Ibid.*, 37.

109 *Ibid.*, 38-41.

110 *Ibid.*, 42-45 'Externa et interna simul, vocatur *Vocatio specialis*, item *efficax*'.

111 *Ibid.*, 48, 49 'Ex vocatione efficaci oritur *Fides*, unde *Fides electorum* a Paulo dicitur 2 Thess. 3. quod iis solis detur. Act. 13. Hinc electi *Fidelis* vocantur. Ex fide oritur *Iustificatio per fidem.* est que hic secundus gradus a Paulo positus'.

112 *De Reconciliatione*, 35-36.

113 *Ibid.*, 17; *De Praedestionatione*, 8, 11, 36.

114 Rollock, *Sel. Works*, 561; *Ad Romanos*, 8:19-39 (138-141); 9:368-369 (234-241); *In Evang.Iohn.*, 5:30-32 (295-301).

115 *Ibid.*, 561-562, 'Huius decriti species quaedam, est praedestinatio praecipuarum creaturarum ad vitam aeternam...est praedestinatio praecipuarum creaturarum ad mortem aeternam'; cf. *Ad Ephesios*, 1:4-6 (8), 'Dei praedestinatio respectu hominum discrimine a sine sumpto, nempe salute et mort: partim est Electio, partim

Reprobatio'; *Ad Romanos*, 8:19-39 (142-146); *In Evang.Iohn.*, 16:19-30 (633-643).

116 *Lect.on 1 Thess.*, 5:8-10 (263).

117 *Five and Twentie Lect.*, 212-214, 227-228; *In Evang.Iohn.*, 17:1-26 (843-877).

118 *Sel. Works*, 392.

119 *Ibid.*, 391-392; *In Evang.Iohn.*, 5:30-32 (295-301).

120 *Ad Ephesios*, 1:4-6 (15-16); cf. 1:4-6 (8) 'de Electio ad media, deinde de Electio ad finem'; 1:7 (18); *Lect.on 1 Thess.*, 5:8-10 (264).

121 *Ibid.*, 1:4-6 (11), 'Christum ab aeterno suisse Mediatorem nostrum'; *Lect.on Col.*, 1:20 (66-67); *Tractatus de Iustificatione*, in *Ad Hebraeos*, 242.

122 *Ibid.*, 1:8-10 (21); cf. 1:7 (18-19); *Ad Romanos*, 8:19-39 (185); *Tract.de Iustificatione*, 242-243.

123 *Sel. Works*, 271; *Lect.on 1 Thess.*, 5:24-28 (336-338).

124 *Ibid.*, 265-266; cf. 442-443; *Lect.on 1 Thess.*, 1:4-6 (15-16); 2:3-7 (55); *Com.in Pet.*, 2:9-10 (40b-43a).

125 *Ibid.*, 371.

126 *Exp.on Psalmes*, 3:8-9 (31); 32:1-7 (156).

127 *Ad Romanos*, 8:19-39 (138-218).

128 *Sel. Works*, 266-267; see Letham, 'Saving Faith', 1.270.

129 *Ibid.*, 267-268.

130 *Ad Romanos*, 2:17-29 (29-30); 9:6-23 (228-234); 11:1-16 (253-260).

131 *Sel. Works*, 218-219; *Ad Ephesios*, 1:4-6 (15-16).

132 *Exp.on Psalmes*, 137:1-6 (493-494); 51:1-19 (395, 397-398); *Sel. Works*, 209-210, 246-248; *Ad Hebraeos*, 3:7-19 (28-32); 4:1-3 (33-35); 6:1-8 (57-59).

133 *Lect.on 2 Thess.*, 2:11-14 (97); cf. *Lect.on 1 Thess.* 5:8-10 (261-262).

134 Howie, *ΧΡΙΣΤΕ ΕΥΟΔΩΣΟΝ*, (Basel, 1589). This work in Edinburgh University Library has the inscription 'M. Roberto Rolloco Hoveaeus mittit' in Howie's handwriting. See Cameron, ed. *Letters*, xlvi-xlvii.

135 J. Craig, *A Short Sum of the Whole Catechism Wherein the Question is put and answered in few Words for the greater Ease of the Common People and Children*, (Edinburgh, 1581), in T.F. Torrance, *School of Faith*, 96-165. There is an older edition: *Craig's Catechism*, ed. T.G. Law, (Edinburgh, 1885).

136 For biographical detail see: Calderwood, *History*, 2.94 etc.; 3.4 etc.; 4.2 etc.; 5.96 etc.; 6.318; Knox, *Works*, 2.418, 424 etc.; 6.285 etc.; R. Bannatyne, *Memorials*, 72,75,96,118-121,124-132,170,253; Spottiswoode, *History*, 2.52-54, 268; 3.91-94; Scott, *Fasti*, 6.35-36; A. Mackay, *DNB*, 12.445-447.

137 Mackay, *DNB*, 446-447.

138 Torrance, *op.cit.*, 97-98.

139 Craig, *Catechism*, 100.

140 *Ibid.*, 134.

141 *Ibid.*, 135-136, 142.

142 *Ibid.*, 134-135, 107-108, 142.

143 *Ibid.*, 117-120, 124-126; cf. 113.

144 *Ibid.*, 103, 105.

145 A. Melville, *Commentarius in Divinam Pauli Epistolam ad Romanos*, (WSoc. Edinburgh, 1849), vi.

146 *Ibid.*, 417-418, 425-426.

147 *Ibid.*, 429, 477 'Sexto διαθῆκαι, tabulae foederis in arca duae: nam haud scio an duo foedera, alterum gratiae, alterum operum significet'.

148 *Ibid.*, 447-451; 428-429.

149 C. Ferme, *Analysis Logica in Epistolam Apostoli Pauli ad Romanos in qua omnia verba, sententiae et Phrases difficiliores ex sacris Scripturis exactè, solidè et dilucidè explicantur*, (Edinburgh, 1651). Originally lecture on Romans, the MSS of this work lay neglected until one of Ferme's pupils, J. Adamson recovered and published it in 1651. See Alexander, 'Life of Ferme' in *Logical Analysis*, xix-xx.

150 Alexander, 'Life of Ferme', xiii; For other biographical references see *BUK*, 486; Calderwood, *History*, 6.292, 342, 445; 7.21; McCrie, *Life of Melville*, 2.400; Grant, *History of University*, 2,190; Scott, *Fasti*, 6.220-221; A. Gordon, *DNB*, 18.368-369.

151 Calderwood, *History*, 292, 445, 590, 702.

152 Ferme, *Ad Romanos*, 1:19-20 (13-14).

153 *Ibid.*, 2:13-15 (25-27); 5:13-14 (75-77).

154 *Ibid.*, 5:20 (81-82); cf. Calvin, *Com.on Gen.*, 2:16; *Com.on Rom.*, 7:10-11; *Com.on 2 Cor.*, 3:7.

155 *Ibid.*, 9:5 (162) 'quaram primam et Moralem Legem Apostolus hic vocat foedera, quod foederis operum conditionem contineat, *Gal.*3.12 et foedera pluraliter dicit Apostolus, non foedus, quae cuiusvis Praecepti violatio conditionis violatio est *Jacob 2.10. quasi quot Legis*

Moralis praecepta sunt, tot essent foedera seu foederis operum conditiones, quas omnes qui non plene praestiterit, nihil illi ex operum foedere expectandum, nisi execratio et maledictio Legis, Gal. 3.10'.

156 *Ibid.*, 5:12-19 (74-81).

157 *Ibid.*, 9:5 (163).

158 *Ibid.*, 9:8 (167) 'non externo dumtaxat ministerio, sed secundum internam gratiam'.

159 *Ibid.*, 2:29 (32).

160 *Ibid.*, 10:20-21 - 11:1-5 (206-211).

161 Ussher, *Works*, 1:2-7; McCrie, *Life of Melville*, 2.291-294.

162 J. Durkan and J. Kirk, *The University of Glasgow, 1451-1577*, (Glasgow, 1977), 303.

CHAPTER TWENTY

Conclusion

The weight of evidence gathered in this study leans heavily towards the view that the theology of the covenant does not represent any great divergence on the part of later Reformed covenantal theologians from the theology of the Reformers themselves. In order to establish something of the extent of the unity and continuity of covenantal thought, the sweep of this work has extended over a much longer period than was originally intended. It has also come to include additional glances at the idea of the covenant as it appeared in the church fathers and as it was used in medieval times, demonstrating that it was not something that originated with the Reformers, but has, in so many of its essential features, a much older history. The study, however, has concentrated mainly on the Reformers themselves and particularly on where the dividing line has frequently been drawn between Calvin and the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Calvinists leading up to the Westminster Assembly.

There are many other writers, particularly in the English Puritan stream, whose theology could have been assessed in a study of this nature.[1] But those dealt with are probably most representative of the flow of the Reformed tradition from the time of its genesis in Switzerland to the enshrinement of its teaching in the Westminster Standards, and therefore serve as a reasonable guide for answering some of the queries posed.

The basic question is, of course, whether or not the theology of the covenant as portrayed by the late sixteenth- and early seventeeth-century theologians leading up to the formulation of the *Westminster Confession* represents a major point of departure from that of the

Reformers. The approach to such an enquiry is all-important. For example, it can be considered on the basis of the terminology employed. This approach leads to the further difficulty of deciding what terms are to be regarded as valid criteria. If such terms as *pactum salutis*, *foedus naturale*, *foedus creationis*, and *foedus operum* are thought necessary to formulating a theology of the covenant and to establishing essential unity between the Reformers and their successors in this respect, then a dividing line would need to be drawn. Heidelberg would have to be regarded as the cradle of covenantal or federal theology, as Ursinus and Olevianus were almost certainly the first to use them.[2]

On the other hand, if the terms *foedus legale* and *foedus gratia* are a sufficient terminological base on which to establish unity and continuity, then there is plenty of supportive evidence, as they are to be found in the writings of practically all the Reformers. Calvin's writings in particular were seen to be permeated with this kind of terminology in a manner which probably exceeded his use of most other theological terms.[3] Beza also was familiar with such terms, and even used the phrase 'doctrine of works' synonomously with *foedus legale*.[4]

A second suggested approach to the question was to consider the covenant as the organizing principle in assessing the theological systems. If this is taken to mean an external principle clearly discernible in the outer structure of the theology, again the origins of covenantal theology would have to be sought this side of the Reformers themselves. Olevianus' *Expositio Symboli Apostolici* (1576) would qualify as the earliest work of this nature, and even then the covenantal principle could arguably be regarded as subordinate to the creedal structure itself.[5] Bullinger's *De Testamento*, though the first Reformed work to be published specifically on the covenant, can hardly be viewed as a theological system.[6]

If, however, this standard for assessing the covenantal character of theological works was permitted to include the idea of an internal organizing principle, rather than external (a distinction favoured by Lillback), then the catalyst of Reformed covenantal theology would be found not in Heidelberg, but in Geneva, in the works of Calvin himself. The covenant pervaded Calvin's entire system in a way that was not matched by any of the Reformers before him, and by few of his successors. It was somewhere related to practically every doctrine that Calvin dealt with - predestination, the Edenic arrangement, the law of God, the work of the Mediator, pneumatology, ecclesiology, sacramental theology, and the application of redemption in all of its aspects, calling, justification, adoption, sanctification, and glorification. It was like a linch-pin in Calvin's system, without which the entire external structure, whatever its features, would have been seriously defective. In this respect the covenant was an interpretive principle of great significance in the formulation of Calvin's theology, whether in the *Institutes*, commentaries or sermons. This use of the covenant, as an internal organizing or interpretive principle in relation to the major doctrines of the faith, was an ever-present feature found in varying degrees in the writings of those who followed Calvin. Beza used it, notably in his *Cantique des Cantiques.*[7] The Heidelberg, Puritan and Scottish theologians employed it in similar fashion.

The third method of approaching the question posed above, and by far the most satisfactory, is to examine the content of the theology of the various writers and to ascertain whether the basic idea (or ideas) of covenantal thought is to be found. Here again it is necessary initially to ask what constitutes such an idea. Some consider a pretemporal agreement between the Father and Son concerning the salvation of men as a necessary constituent

element in covenantal theology. Others look upon a prelapsarian covenant of works as the essential identifying feature. Again the idea of one eternal covenant of grace as the basis of the soteriological relationship between God and man in all ages with the subsequent covenantal unity of progressive revelation in the Scriptures is thought to be sufficient in providing an adequate definition.[8]

As the pretemporal 'covenant of redemption' as distinct from the covenant of grace came to be discussed more fully after the period covered in this research, it will be left aside just now, although there is ample evidence to justify further research into the thesis that the underlying idea of this covenant can be traced back into the works of the Reformers themselves, particularly in relation to the doctrine of the believer's union with Christ. It is, however, the other suggested constituent elements of the theology of the covenant that have been the concern of this work, and they must now be more fully assessed.

The first of these, that is, the idea of a prelapsarian covenant of works with Adam, has been singled out as the essential hallmark of seventeenth-century federal theology as distinct from the theology of the Reformers. This position has been set out by a number of writers, pinpointing its various aspects.[9] The salient features are as follows: First it was a covenant of works made with Adam as the representative or federal head of the human race before the fall, as distinct from the postlapsarian covenant of grace. Secondly it was binding upon all men, both before and after the fall, because the conditions of the covenant reflected the law of God written into Adam's heart in creation. In the third place it declared that man was basically a legal creature from creation. The law played a primary role in the maintenance or maturing of the relationship Adam enjoyed with God.[10]

Certain implications or deductions have been drawn from these premises. One was that the covenant of works was primary and was therefore the all-important covenant. The covenant of grace was simply a secondary, restorative remedy to bring fallen man back to that initial relationship based on the covenant of works. Another was that covenantal theology made 'a radical dichotomy between the sphere of Nature and the sphere of Grace'.[11] In other words it created a place in Christianity for natural theology since man apart from the covenant of grace stood related to God as his Sovereign and Judge under the sanctions of natural law. The doctrine of creation was said therefore to occupy an area in theology quite distinct from the area of grace and redemption.[12] As an extension of this, a further deduction made from the premises of the covenant of works was that it posited the priority of law over grace. It was affirmed that law was the governing factor in the prelapsarian covenant, and since the conditions of the covenant of works were still binding on all men, even regenerate men, after the fall, grace was therefore subordinated to a continuing 'oppressive legalism'.[13]

This, in brief outline, is the essence of 'covenant theology' as viewed by those who regard the prelapsarian covenant as its essential feature, together with a summary of the main deductions drawn from it by those who see it as 'a transformation of thought' in the Reformed tradition, or as a significant shift in 'a basic presupposition' of Calvinism, which, it is claimed, was the use of an old covenant/new covenant distinction rather than a covenant of works/covenant of grace dichotomy.[14] Or again, going to the extreme, it has been considered not merely as a shift in thought, but as the introduction of an entirely new theology of which Calvin knew nothing at all.[15]

In some presentations of this discontinuous

interpretation there is a distinction made between 'the covenant idea and the covenant theology'.[16] This is an unhappy manner of speaking. It could imply that it is possible to have theology without ideas, or that you can have a theological idea, in this case the 'covenant idea', without a theology. However, the explanation given of the distinction was that the 'covenant idea' was the general structure of the gracious salvific, covenantal relationship between God and his people which Christianity inherited from the Old Testament examples of Noah, Abraham, David, etc., and which was 'common Christian property'. The 'covenant theology' was explained in terms of the federal structure outlined above and was a later acquisition of the Calvinists or federal theologians and had its origins in German soil, mainly in the works of Ursinus and Olevianus. So what was really being said here was that a new idea of the covenant was being added to, or superceding, the older idea.[17]

These deductions and distinctions must now be considered in the light of this research, and it can only be concluded that they have been largely overdrawn or in some instances proved to be totally unwarranted. In the first place, while the Reformers did not use the specific term *foedus operum*, the constituent elements in the idea of a covenant of works were present in their theology. By referring to the covenant of grace as eternal they did not thereby imply that the covenant of grace as manifest in the *post lapsus* situation had always been the controlling factor in the relationship between God and man from the creation itself. The fall introduced a distinctive difference which necessitated a different arrangement on a different basis, if man was to have any further enjoyment of fellowship with God or hope of eternal glorification. Calvin himself made this clear when he pointed out that man unfallen would not have needed the redemptive work of a Mediator as accomplished by Christ.[18]

The Edenic situation, therefore, as viewed by Calvin and by the federal theologians, was one in which Adam's fellowship with God and his hope of further glory was maintained by a conditional arrangement. Adam was promised life for obedience and threatened with death for disobedience. The tree represented a tangible test of the perfect obedience that Adam was to render.[19] Calvin saw no incongruity in man, by the strength and enabling with which he was endowed as a creature in the image of God, 'meriting' the continuance of life. And he even went so far on one occasion as to speak of the arrangement in covenantal terms.[20]

Furthermore, the inference drawn from this position that the covenant of grace was thereby a second-rate arrangement, a kind of afterthought by God when man's disobedience had foiled his initial purpose, reflects a very restricted and limited view of the theology of the later covenantal theologians.[21] They, as much as Calvin, taught the covenant of grace within the overarching context of the eternal, saving purpose of God in Christ. In this respect the covenant of works and creation itself were contained within that purpose, which leaves any reference to second-rate afterthoughts totally out of place, and little more than a caricature of covenantal theology.

The second premise of the idea of a prelapsarian covenant, which is that the conditions of the covenant were binding upon all men in all ages, again provides no more adequate grounds for asserting discontinuity between the Reformers and their successors than did the first. The basic reason for this is that the conditions of the covenant reflected the conditions of the moral law, as though the decalogue had been written in the heart of Adam when God created him. Calvin did not use the term 'conditions of the covenant' in order to describe the obligation under which Adam was naturally placed by virtue of creation, but there is no doubt at all that he

considered Adam as essentially under the same law that was later published in verbal form by Moses.[22]

Continuity of this obligation *post lapsus*, for both Calvin and the covenantal theologians, was based on the fact that the law was an expression of the unchanging character and will and righteousness of God. It was therefore the regulative standard of righteousness in man's relationship with God in any given situation, for the simple reason that God was immutable. That the fall of man gave to the law of God or the covenant of works a different function from that which it had previously is a point that was universally made in the Reformed tradition. This was the condemnatory role the law now had in revealing to men their need of salvation and directing them to the One who had provided salvation by fulfilling or satisfying the requirements of that righteousness which they could no longer reach. Whether those requirements were referred to in terms of the conditions of the covenant of works or in terms of the moral law under which Adam and his posterity were placed makes no difference whatsoever to the theological idea being taught.

Reformed theology did not need to await the adoption of the Melanchthonian natural law theory by Ursinus in order to formulate the idea of a *foedus naturale* or *foedus creationis*.[23] Ursinus may have sharpened the concepts into these more precise definitions, but all the requirements of the idea were already present in Calvin's portrayal of the Edenic arrangement. There was a place in Reformed theology for natural law and natural theology right from the beginning of the Reformation, keeping in mind, of course, what the Reformers and their successors shrewdly held, and which some modern interpreters have overlooked, that there is a vast difference between what is natural in an unfallen world and what is natural *post lapsus*.[24] What was natural in Eden was a manifestation of the goodness and benevolence of God, and therefore of his

grace in that sense. What is 'natural' since the fall is spoiled and corrupted through sin, and bereft of divinely given strength.

It is difficult to understand the inference drawn from this place given to nature and natural law in covenantal theology that it reduces God 'too readily to the arbitrary God or the contract God', and that the alleged separation between nature and grace 'amounts to a pre-Reformation medieval view that *grace presupposes nature* and *grace perfects nature* - a departure from the emphasis in Calvin that nothing is prior to grace'.[25] But none of the Reformers, or of the covenantal theologians whose works have been examined, posited such a dichotomy between nature and grace. They spoke of the Edenic arrangement as a manifestation of grace, that everything man received from God including his own being was the undeserved gift of God. Grace was not something apart from creation and which only came into being after the fall. Certainly a new aspect of the grace of God in the form of mercy to sinful creatures was manifest after the fall, but this was a further demonstration, in a situation that had not previously existed, of divine condescension and goodness which man had already enjoyed in the relationship arranged by God in his sinless condition. There is clear evidence that Calvin and his successors distinguished between grace *pre lapsus* and grace *post lapsus*. For all of them nothing was prior to grace, but this did not necessarily mean that creation was not a gracious act of God or that law, natural or verbalized, could not have a regulative place in the gracious ordering of that creation.[26]

The third premise of the prelapsarian covenant of works mentioned above is really part of the same discussion. As it stands, unqualified, there is no warrant for it whatsoever. No evidence has been found in this research to conclude that covenantal theologians have held man to be primarily a legal creature from creation and

nothing more. That he was subject to the law of God, and therefore a legal creature in this sense they fully believed, as did Calvin, but as pointed out above they considered the creation of man to be a gracious act and the bestowal of all with which man was endowed as something wholly undeserved. Indeed they affirmed that if man had continued in perfect obedience to God's law and received the benefits promised to obedience, even these would have been undeserved, as obedience was man's natural duty apart from any promise God condescended to make.[27] Those who infer that the prelapsarian covenant of works and the continuing obligation to its conditions as expressed in the moral law presupposes the priority of law over grace and a continuing binding legalism, can only do so by holding that any notion of law is utterly incompatible with the grace of God. Given the Reformers' view of the law of God as the expression of his character and will, this would have amounted to them opposing God against himself.

One other matter needs to be considered in relation to the covenant of works, that is, the charge that the federal scheme brought about a shift in 'a basic presupposition of Calvinist thought'. This was that the old covenant/new covenant distinction was now subsumed under the covenant of grace with the introduction of the covenant of works as 'the new element in Calvinist thinking'.[28] The inference here is that 'the new element' meant that the work of Christ must now be interpreted in terms of covenant-keeping, that is, as the new Adam coming to keep and fulfil the continuing binding conditions of the covenant of works on behalf of the elect, so that the covenant of grace actually constituted the fulfilment of the covenant of works.

Two things need to be said in response to this. The first is that Calvin did not hold to a rigid old covenant/new covenant hermeneutical distinction. He followed a letter/spirit distinction in which he taught

that there was one way of salvation in one covenant of grace for all men from Adam to the present day.[29] When Calvin mentioned any distinction between old covenant and new covenant he was either referring to the Old and New Testaments and the different administrations of the covenant of grace which was one in substance in both eras, or he was referring to the 'bare law' or the mere letter of the law as divorced by the Jews from the spirit of the law which was of the essence of the gospel or the new covenant in Christ.[30] So for Calvin any old covenant/new covenant distinction was also subsumed under one covenant of grace.

The second thing that must be said in this connection is that Calvin's view of the mediatorial work of Christ also stressed his place as the second Adam who had come to undo and make right what the first Adam had done both to himself and his posterity in his disobedience. Christ's work as the second Adam and as the Mediator of the covenant of grace was to make satisfaction to the righteousness, justice and judgment of God on behalf of the elect. They could no longer attain to the standard of God's righteousness in his law, and stood condemned under the justice and penalty incurred by the violation of his law. Christ's work, therefore, was essentially a law work. In his infinite love he fulfilled the requirements of the law for his people, and took the condemnation and curse of the broken law which they deserved.[31] Calvin may not have said that Christ was fulfilling the conditions of the covenant of works, but the evidence suggests that he was communicating exactly the same idea as the covenantal theologians concerning the work of Christ when they spoke in that manner.

As far as the other concept of 'covenant theology' is concerned, the idea of one eternal covenant of grace as the ground of man's saving relationship with God throughout history, and the related view of the Scripture as revealing the unity of the substance of that covenant in both

Testaments, it is so obvious and explicit in all the theological works examined that it requires little additional comment[32] There is however one area where a further element of discontinuity has been alleged that needs to be reviewed. This is the distinction suggested between a bilateral, conditional view of the covenant of grace on the one hand, and a unilateral, testamentary view on the other.[33] This distinction has been used to posit a 'two traditions' theory in Reformed development. Here Calvin was not only set against many of his Calvinist successors, but he was said to have differed fundamentally in this respect from Bullinger in Zurich and the Rhineland Reformers. Calvin, it was claimed, because of his supralapsarian doctrine of predestination could only have held to a unilateral, testamentary notion of covenant, while Bullinger and others who held to a more infralapsarian view of predestination, developed a mutual, conditional view.

The result of this theory was seen to produce confusing and conflicting views among those who adopted it as to where various writers should be placed. But the result of this research has been to observe that there was a two-sidedness in the covenant which was acknowledged by all the writers considered. The attempt to reinforce the bilateral/unilateral distinction on linguistic grounds was found to receive little support from the Reformers or their successors. The Hebrew term *berith* was seen to incorporate the idea of a sovereign disposition on the one hand and the idea of mutual obligations or conditions on the other. The Greek word διαθήκε served to convey all that was intended by *berith* in the divine/human relationship in a way that the alternative συνθήκη could not have done. The evidence indicates that in the Reformed writings, the various Latin translations were used to convey both the unilateral and bilateral aspects of the covenant. All writers invariably used the terms *foedus*,

pactum and *testamentum*, interchangeably except in a couple of New Testament passages where the idea of last will was being conveyed. Calvin's own explanation of the relation of covenant to testament in his *Commentary on Hebrews* 9:16-18 leaves no room for a basic theological difference to be constructed.[34]

In all Calvin's works, but especially in the commentaries and sermons, there was a repeated insistence on the mutuality and conditionality of the covenant, alongside his emphasis on the sovereignty of grace. And there was no evidence that Calvin felt his view of predestination in any way forcing him into a solely unilateral view of the covenant. He fully recognized the problem of relating the idea of a unilateral decree with the idea of conditionality. But he did not abandon the latter aspect on that account. Just as Beza and the later Calvinists were to do, he left the ultimate resolution of that problem in the secret will of God. But as far as the execution of the revealed will of God was concerned, he explained the implications of the conditionality of the covenant in terms of his twofold view of election, stressing that the conditions were ultimately fulfilled in Christ for the secret elect, thus ensuring their final perserverance.[35] There was not found to be any substantial theological divergence between the theology of Bullinger and that of Calvin in this area. Any variation can be attributed to differences of emphasis. Bullinger considered the sovereign mercies and grace of God to be 'the principal part' of the covenant just as much as Calvin.[36]

This dual pattern in the covenant of grace was seen to emerge in all the writers considered, some with more emphasis on one side than the other, but all affirming the essential two-sidedness of the covenant. Nor was the idea of conditionality ever portrayed in any of the works surveyed as meritorous conditions that could bring life.

Always they were pointed out as consequent conditions which were fulfilled in the covenant for the elect. Faith as a condition of the covenant was always the gift of the regenerating Spirit, and repentance and good works, where spoken of as conditions, were seen as the necessary fruits of faith and also attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit and not to any ability inherent in man.[37]

The continuing function of the law of God in the life of the regenerate was presented in this same context. Nowhere did the law continue to be viewed as a covenant by which life could be merited. It was always seen as a rule of life, as a guide to the nature of good works, and as an evidence of life.[38] No hint of merit was attached to the believer's obedience, which was always acknowledged as still coming short of God's required righteousness, but such obedience and works were nevertheless acceptable to God, because in the work of the Mediator of the covenant they too, with all pertaining to the Christian, were justified and accounted righteous for the sake of Christ.[39]

The charge of 'oppressive legalism' in the thought of the *Westminster Confession* and other covenantal works has been based on the implication that because of the place of law in the covenant, man was therefore obliged in his own strength to observe the commandments and thereby merit some degree of acceptance with God. The obligation of obedience to the law was construed as being meritorious in the postlapsarian situation as well as in the Edenic arrangement. The conditions of the covenant of works were alleged to be carried over into the covenant of grace without acknowledgement of any difference of function. In view of the Reformed concept of the justification of the believer's good works and obedience, this charge was clearly a total misconception of the *tertius usus legis* or the continuing place of the law in the Christian life, in relation to the covenant.

When the basic ideas of the covenant, rather than the

question of terms and structures, are made the standard of judgment in assessing the covenantal value of the theology of the Reformers and their successors, a strong case can be made out for the unity and continuity of the Reformed tradition in this field. The content of Calvin's theology not only gave a significant place to the covenant of grace in both its unilateral and bilateral aspects, but also contained, in his view of the Edenic arrangement between God and Adam, all the essential ingredients of what was later to be termed the covenant of nature, or the covenant of creation, and the covenant of works.

And what of Calvin's successor in Geneva, who has so often been pointed out as the chief cause of discontinuity? When attention was focused upon his works, it was discovered that, contrary to general opinion, he too had his place in the flow of Reformed covenantal thought in the late sixteenth century. Both Calvin and Beza had a significant influence on the theology of Heidelberg and Herborn in this respect, and in turn the general unity of covenantal thought from Zurich, Geneva and Heidelberg flowed into the English Puritan stream and the Scottish connection until it was incorporated in the concise definitions of the Westminster standards for future generations.

NOTES: Chapter Twenty

1 It was hoped that time and space might permit some consideration of the works of John Preston, Samuel Bolton, Thomas Blake and William Ames, but this was not possible.

2 cf. Weir, *'Foedus Naturale'*, x-xi, 184, who says that Ursinus, in 1562, had 'the first articulation of federal theology' by a Reformed theologian.

3 *Infra*, 1.314-315.

4 *Infra*, 2.83.

5 *Infra*, 2.143.

6 *Infra*, 1.278-279.

7 *Infra*, 2.62ff.

8 eg. J.G. Vos, 'Basic Principles of Covenant Theology', *BBFL*, 21.3 (1966), 99; Moltmann, 'Föderaltheologie', 190; Lillback, 'The Binding of God', 29.

9 Weir, *op.cit.*, 6-10, has one of the most succinct outlines.

10 *Ibid.*, 6-8.

11 Torrance, 'Covenant or Contract?', 67-68.

12 Weir, *op.cit.*, 6.

13 Holmes Rolston, *Calvin versus the Westminster Confession*, 17,19, 21-22, 90, 93.

14 Weir, *op.cit.*, 3, 6.

15 Holmes Rolston, *op.cit.*, 5-6, 23.

16 W.A. Brown, 'Covenant Theology', 216, 219; cf. Weir, *op.cit.*, 4f.

17 *Ibid.*, 216, 218-220.

18 *Infra*, 1.348; cf. 1.57; 2.263.

19 *Infra*, 1.346-347.

20 *Infra*, 2.44-45.

21 eg. Barth, *infra*, 1.131-132; Holmes Rolston, *op.cit.*, 20-22.

22 *Infra*, 1.345.

23 *Infra*, 1.344-345; 2.123-125.

24 *Infra*, 1.58-59; cf. 2.263.

25 Torrance, 'Calvinism and Puritanism', 273.

26 Helm, 'Calvin and Natural Law', *SBET*, 2 (1984), 16-17.

27 *Infra*, 1.56-57; 1.344, 347-348; 2.149.

28 Weir, *op.cit.*, 3, 6.

29 *Infra*, 1.318ff.

30 *Infra*, 1.362-363.

31 *Infra*, 1.355-358. T.F Torrance's claim that Calvin's references to the justice of God directed against man in his law served only 'a didactic purpose in his theology' is most unconvincing (*Calvin's Doctrine of Man*, 19-20).

32 *Infra*, 1.263-264; 267-268; 272-273; 280-284; 318-336; 2.61-67; 118-120; 146-147; 181-182; 191-194; 260-262.

33 Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant*, is one of the clearest expositions of this view (see, *infra*, 1.171-172.

34 *Infra*, 2.46-48.

35 *Infra*, 2.26-28.

36 *Infra*, 1.281-282.

37 *Infra*, 1.288; 2.13-14; 84-85; 130-131; 212-213; 266-267.

38 *Infra*, 1.72-74; 361-364; 2.121; 156.

39 *Infra*, 1.367-368; 2.93; 131; 178; 216.

ABBREVIATIONS

AFR	*Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*
AHR	*American Historical Review*
ANCL	*Anti Nicene Christian Library*
APS	*Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*
BA	*Biblical Archeologist*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BBFL	*Blue Banner Faith and Life*
BFER	*British and Foreign Evangelical Review*
BOT	*Banner of Truth*
BUK	*Booke of the Universall Kirk*
CH	*Church History*
CJT	*Canadian Journal of Theology*
CP	*Catholic Presbyterian*
CQR	*Church Quarterly Review*
CR	Corpus Reformatorum
CTJ	Calvin Theological Journal
CTS	Calvin Translation Society
EHR	*English Historical Review*
ENCT	Elizabethan Non-Conformist Texts
EQ	*Evangelical Quarterly*
ERE	*Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*
ET	*Expository Times*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBS	*Journal of British Studies*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JES	*Journal of Ecumenical Studies*
JHI	*Journal of the History of Ideas*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JRH	*Journal of Religious History*
JPH	*Journal of Presbyterian History*
JPHS	*Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*
LCC	Library of Christian Classics
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LFK	*Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche*
MQR	*Mennonite Quarterly Review*
NIDCC	*New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*
NIDNTT	*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*
NSHE	*New Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*
OXDCC	*Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*
PHSL	*Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London*
PR	*Presbyterian Review*
PrinR	*Princeton Review*
PTR	*Princeton Theological Review*
PRR	*Presbyterian and Reformed Review*

PSoc	Parker Society
PSAS	*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*
RE	*Real-Encyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kircke*
RHPR	*Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Réligeuses*
RR	*Reformed Review*
RSCHS	*Records of the Scottish Church History Society*
SCJ	*Sixteenth Century Journal*
SHR	*Scottish Historical Review*
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
STS	*Scottish Text Society*
TB	*Tyndale Bulletin*
TCERK	*Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
WCF	*Westminster Confession of Faith*
WDCC	*Westminster Dictionary of the Christian Church*
WSoc	Wodrow Society
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZKG	*Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*

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